

SEP 19 1985



1946



1951



1959



1978

# Calvinist Contact

# 40th anniversary

"Let everything  
that has breath  
praise the Lord"  
Psalm 150:6.

## Forty is a workspan

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Forty years may not sound like much, but for a group of people who immigrated from Holland, it is a milestone. It takes you back to August 6 of 1945, when an 8½ x 14 sheet called *The Canadian Calvinist* was cranked off a stencil machine in Edmonton. It was the brainchild of Christian Reformed Church minister Paul De Koekkoek.

The first issue devoted brief paragraphs to education, politics, children's allowance, church matters and vacations. It was written entirely in English for Dutch immigrants. Continued on page 2 ...



Current editor Bert Witvoet surrounded by his predecessors (counterclockwise from far left): Dick Farenhorst, John Vander Vliet, Keith Knight, Paul De Koekkoek, Ad Otten and John Gritter.



# The number 40

Nicholas B. Knoppers

Someone has said that numbers in the Bible "have a fatal attraction for cranks and crackpots — even for wise men in their less guarded moments."

This evaluation is so true, right from the church fathers on. Even a wise man like Augustine saw something extraordinary in the 153 fishes caught by the disciples after the resurrection. Begin with the number ten which stands for the Ten Commandments. Add the number seven which refers to the Holy Spirit, and the total is 17. Now add all the numbers from one to 17 (1 + 2 + 3 + 4...): the grand total is 153. For Augustine, then, this number is the symbol of the believers who by the Spirit fulfil the Law of God.

In the days of the Reformers and counter-Reformers, a scholar wrote a book of almost 700 pages. Many pages are devoted to the number 666 which the author had found to be equivalent to the name of Luther.

In modern times people like Scofield, Lindsey, Kirban, and Solbrekken speculate in fantastic ways with numbers found in the books *Daniel* and *Revelation*.

Careful and respectful Bible reading calls for taking most numbers at face value. These numbers are to be understood as representing exactly that amount, unless "there is either textual or contextual evidence to the contrary." Here too Scripture interprets Scripture.

This does not mean, however, that there are no other ways in which numbers and statistics are used in Scripture. Some numbers, like 100 and 1,000, are used as rounded numbers. They designate a fairly long period of time without being precisely accurate. We use numbers this way too. How many casualties were there in that plane crash? At least 200. The exact amount can be five less or eight more.

Furthermore, there are some difficulties with the larger numbers in census lists and military statistics in the Bible. Yet, even in these cases, the context or other sources usually provide sufficient data to help us understand the sense in which these numbers are used.

What about the fact that certain numbers are used more frequently than others?

The number seven occurs, one way or

another, in nearly 600 passages in the Bible. The number three is used over 450 times.

The frequency must be significant. Checking the context of the number seven leads to the conclusion that it symbolizes "completion" and "perfection." In the same way, we find that the symbolic meaning conveyed by the number three is "fullness."

The number 40 is also known for its repetitious use in the Bible. It plays a significant part in the sacred history, especially in Old Testament times. Reflecting on its frequent use at particular places and times, we detect the fascinating story of the trek of the Redeemed through the wilderness to the Great Future. In newspaper language we'd say: the story of a mobile family on the way home, where they will be free at last. In Calvinistic jargon: 40 signifies the unfolding drama of the Kingdom here and now — and not yet. Closer reflection on how the number 40 is used tells a lot more about this drama.

40 ... is the time span of a *generation*. A whole generation, with few exceptions, was doomed to die in the wilderness, and this sojourn in the desert lasted 40 years.

40 ... is the moment of reaching *maturity*. Isaac and Esau married at 40. Moses was 40 years old when he visited his people. At the age of 40 Joshua was sent to scout the promised land.

40 ... stands for *judgment*. At the time of the Flood it rained for 40 days. Moses had to stay 40 years in Midian. For 40 years Israel had to bear the burden of its sins. Forty lashes, but no more, was the maximum flagellation. Jonah warned that Nineveh would be destroyed after 40 days.

40 ... is the call for *repentance* and *fasting*. Moses fell down before the Lord 40 days and 40 nights, pleading that Yahweh would not destroy Israel. Face to face with the Holy One, he fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. Our Saviour followed this pattern of fasting as an exercise in close communion with the Father and an inner preparation for the fight against the devil and his whole dominion.

40 ... signifies *Yahweh's grace and faithfulness* all the way. At the time of Noah the waters carried the ark for two



**It takes team effort** to produce a Christian weekly that informs, discusses and keeps contact. Pictured here is the staff who makes it all possible. From l. to r., front row: Bert Witvoet (Editor), Willy Suk-Kleer (accounting and proof reading), Henry de Jong (education page, news and feature writing, mail preparation), Kim Yungblut (typesetting, mailing); second row: Klara Numan (advertising, mailing), Stan De Jong (Publisher and Manager), Marian Van Til (church page, news and feature writing, editorial assistance), Grace Bowman (subscriptions, in charge of mailing), Margaret Griffioen (lay-out, news and feature writing).

times 40 days. Yahweh listened to Moses' plea and did not destroy his people. Even though Israel was again and again unfaithful, it lacked nothing during the trek of 40 years. The land had rest during the good judgeship of Othniel. Elijah went in the strength of the God-given food 40 days and 40 nights to the mount of God. Our Lord remained on earth 40 days after His resurrection. 40 ... tells that Yahweh's favour is on the Redeemed who proclaim and promote the *Messianic justice and mercy*. In the torrent of 40 days, the Lord saved Noah who is called "a preacher of righteousness." Twice 40 are the years of administration of Joseph who used his regal powers to set moral and social standards. During the 40 years in the wilderness Moses was blessed for preserving proper worship and protecting the poor and the widows. The reigns of David, Solomon, and

Joash are recorded as 40 years which indicate Yahweh's favour upon their upholding what is right and beneficial.

Within this issue, *Calvinist Contact* commemorates its 40th Anniversary.

Did our weekly live up to its goal during the 40 years? An examination in the light of the biblical significance of the number 40 is helpful. My personal conclusion of such an examination is that *Calvinist Contact* has done a good job. To former and present editors and staff: well done, good and faithful servants!

Whatever the evaluation of the past, the biblical number 40 can be a stimulus and guide for *Calvinist Contact* tomorrow.

*Nick Knoppers is a retired pastor living in Edmonton, Alta. He is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Calvinist Contact.*

## Forty is a workspan

... continued from page 1.  
who had come to Canada in the first half of the twentieth century.

Four years later a second paper called *Contact* was published in Chatham, Ontario. Intended for post-World War II Dutch immigrants of Reformed background, the 7 1/4 x 10 tabloid was written in Dutch. In 1951 the two papers merged to become *Calvinist-Contact* (the hyphen was dropped in later years). It continued to be published in Chatham until 1954, after which it moved to Hamilton and finally to St. Catharines in 1976.

The history of *Calvinist Contact* reads like the history of the Christian Reformed community in Canada. That community has nurtured a strong conviction that the Christian faith should permeate all of life. Hence it did not restrict itself to church life and personal piety. It initiated Christian schools, a Christian labour union and other forms of Christian action. The pages of *Calvinist Contact* have reflected this preoccupation.

In fact, *Calvinist Contact* is itself the product of this attempt to integrate faith and life. Unlike most other Christian periodicals, it is not a church paper. It's an independent voice, sustained entirely by advertising and

subscriptions. Its front page carries news that goes beyond the realm of church life. Politics, economics, the arts, education ... all fall within the scope of its mandate "to be a faithful witness of what takes place in Canadian society and the world, commenting on events from a Reformed and biblical point of view." (from an editorial policy statement).

Forty years is the "work span" of one generation. In that sense our paper has reached a real milestone. *Calvinist Contact* is 90 percent English now, which in itself is an indication that the next generation has come to the fore and is eager to make its contribution to the Canadian fabric of life. We do so as humble servants of the non-ethnic Lord, Jesus Christ.

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**Behind the scene** of writers and editors at the editorial advisors. The Editorial Advisory Board (pictured here) meets twice a year. A committee of local EAB members meets once a month. From l. to r., front row: Stan De Jong, Ann Hutten; second row: Jacob Kuntz, Ellen Zwart (Chairperson), James R. Dickey, Ineke Parlevliet-Brouwer, William Van Huizen and Nick Knoppers. Not pictured: Nick Loenen, Sonya Vander Veen-Feddema and Bert Witvoet.





# The Canadian Calvinist years: 1945-1951

"Calvinists in Canada must increase!"

Bert Witvoet

The Reverend Paul De Koekkoek may be considered the legitimate father of *Calvinist Contact*. It was he that led a group of Alberta Christian Reformed ministers in establishing a monthly publication called *The Canadian Calvinist*. The first issue — August 6, 1945 — is a stencilled sheet, completely in English. Most of its intended readers have been in Canada for 20 or more years. The beginning of the influx of post-war Dutch immigrants is still two years away.

Calvinists to become Canadian citizens as soon as conditions allow them again, "not only for the protection of their material interests and political privileges, but also to enable them to take active part in the public life of the nation." The editor calls for a study of Canadian political parties, to see how they square with "our Calvinistic world and life view."

A young people's rally to be held in Neerlandia, Alberta on August 6 is important for educational and social reasons, we read. "They help mould the opinions of our youth," and they help young people find partners to establish covenant homes.

## September 1945:

The editors urge Canadian Calvinists to establish Christian high schools. The need is urgent, because the Christian elementary schools need Christian teachers. Public high schools cannot produce the needed teachers and United States teachers "cannot fill the bill in the long run."

Voices are being raised favouring the establishment of a Canadian classis of the Christian Reformed Church in the West. The most important reason, say the editors, is that "Canadian problems can be solved most naturally and intelligently by a Canadian ecclesiastical assembly."

Rev. De Koekkoek, who seems to be the main writer, suggests that applications are piling up in the Dutch city of The Hague for immigration to Canada. "Renewed immigration will be of most vital significance for the successful working out of our program of Christian education. For the sake of the Kingdom, Calvinists in Canada must increase!"

## November 15, 1945:

Mention is made here that the United Church of Canada has 13 ordained women ministers. Writes Rev. M. Keuning: "Male preachers, look out!" In the Christian Reformed churches the

discussion centres around the question, "Should the right of voting be extended to women church members?"

One article tells "girls of The Netherlands" to beware of mixed marriages. "Even girls from Reformed homes seem to fall for our Canadian 'liberators.'" "Investigation of one such husband-to-be showed him of bad reputation, a habitual drinker, swearer, of little financial means, member of the Roman Catholic faith, with only a shack available for living quarters, more than 100 miles from Edmonton."

## December 15, 1945:

Rev. De Koekkoek humorously draws a moral from the untimely death of a Holstein cow Pietje B. She swallowed a piece of wire. "Let us C.C. [Canadian Calvinists] keep foreign substances from our natural and spiritual constitutions. They might prove fatal in both respects."

## January 15, 1946:

This is the last time that *The Canadian Calvinist* is stencilled. We read that a Christian Immigration Bureau has been set up in Hamilton, Ontario. The secretary is Mr. J. Vander Vliet. An immigration committee has also been established in Lacombe, Alberta, around this time.

Further on, mention is made of parcels having been sent to Holland, and that some congregations have donated more than \$1,000 for the poor in post-war Holland.

Someone jokingly said to Rev. Keuning, "We have two seasons here. Winter and the Fourth of July." Maynard Keuning admits that the winters are long in northern Alberta and urges people to use this season well by not being outside the home so much, and to read good books and to give time for home preparation. Is he referring to study preparation for society meetings?

## February 15, 1946:

This is the first printed edition of



*The Canadian Calvinist*. It's a 14 by 11 inch sheet folded once. De Koekkoek is now mentioned as the managing editor. Other editors are still Revs. M. Keuning and J. Roorda. But since Keuning leaves for the United States the next issue replaces him with Rev. P. J. Hoekstra.

Immigration from The Netherlands is not open to many at this time, as a letter from the federal government shows. Admission to Canada is restricted to the wife or child of a Canadian resident, an agriculturalist having sufficient means to farm in Canada, the future wife of a Canadian resident and anyone who has served in the Canadian armed forces. Normal transportation across the ocean is not yet available, since returning troops have priority.

## July 15, 1946:

The editor mentions Dr. W. Stanford Reid, pastor of an Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Montreal, as being "very favourably known by some of our people who worshipped with his congregation during the war emergency." In the issue of August 15, Dr. Reid corrects the editor: the church is Presbyterian, not Orthodox Presbyterian. He further writes that "the day is coming soon when we Canadian Calvinists will have to draw closer together for the good of our country and the spread of the Gospel."

Editor De Koekkoek engages in what seems to be the first debate in C.C.: the difference between a "free" Christian school and a public school controlled by Christians, as in Neerlandia. Apparently the brethren Peter and Cecil Tuininga of Neerlandia had taken

Continued on page 5...



Jack B. Murta, Minister of State Multiculturalism, Ottawa, Canada

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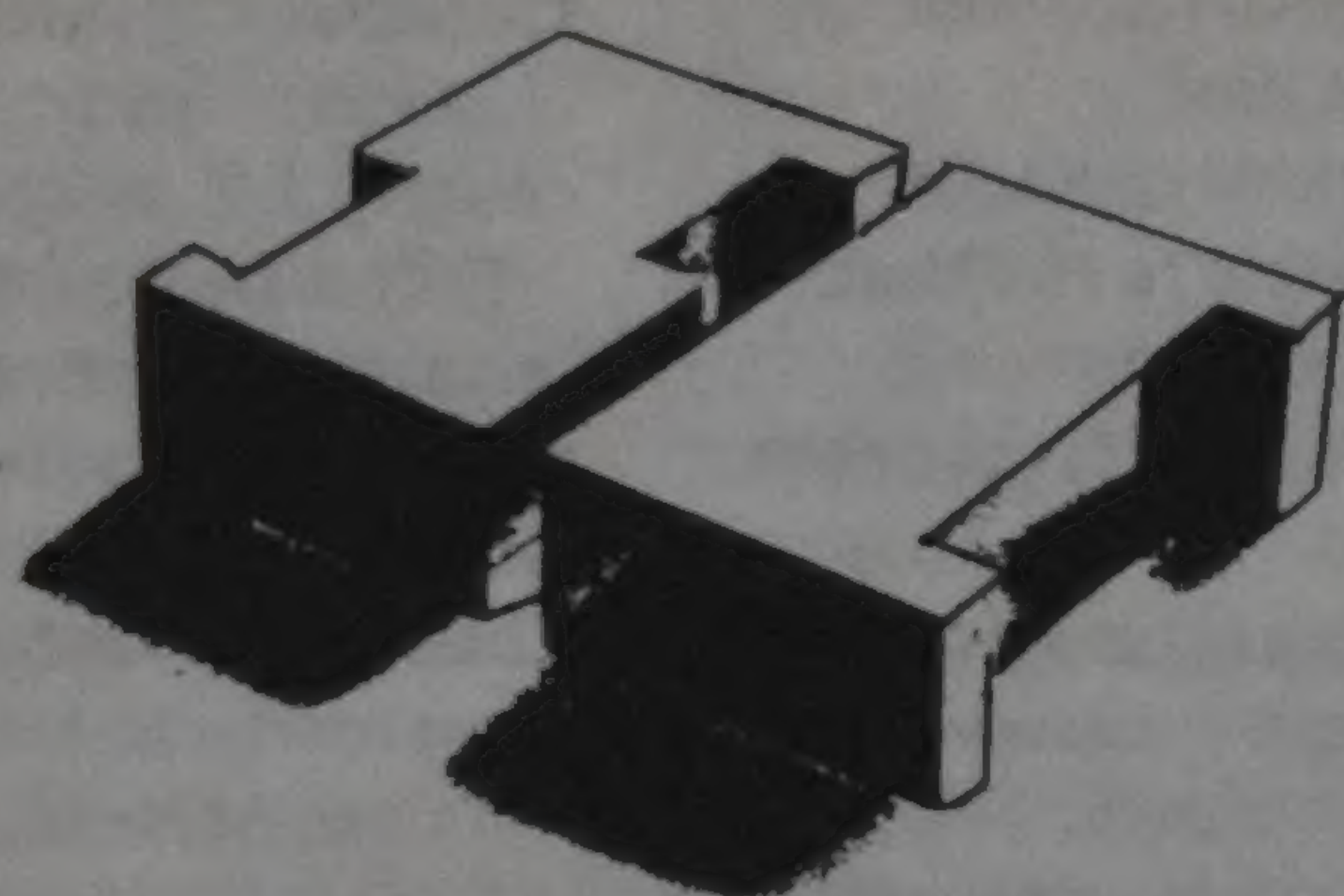
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# The Canadian Calvinist years: 1945-51

...continued from page 3.  
offence at something De Koekkoek had written earlier about the school in Neerlandia.

## October 15, 1946:

This issue carries the first birth announcement: "Although 'baby notices' usually do not find a place in *The Canadian Calvinist*, we cannot refrain from spreading the news that Mary Ellen, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. R. Wildschut, was born September 9th, 1946. Congratulations indeed, and may the ministerial baby prosper in every way!" The fact that the baby was "ministerial" provided the reason for mentioning the birth in C.C., apparently.

There are no classifieds in this paper, but mention is made of marriages and people moving to other places under "Personal and Local."

## November 15, 1946:

The Edmonton CR church has introduced individual communion cups at its latest celebration of the Lord's Supper. According to the reporter, it contributes to the edification of the church. The question is asked whether other churches in Canada use individual cups. It is assumed that "churches" means "Christian Reformed Churches."

The Canadian and American dollars

## From the Ontario government

*As Minister of Citizenship and Culture for the Province of Ontario, I take great pleasure in offering my sincere congratulations on the 40th anniversary of Calvinist Contact.*

*In this complex society in which we live, newspapers play a vital role in bearing witness to events that take place within the community and throughout the world. We in Canada are exceptionally fortunate to have a publication such as Calvinist Contact serving the broader Christian Reformed community. Through thoughtful and responsible journalism, the paper has encouraged its avid readers over the years to reflect clearly on the reported issues of the day.*

*Let me extend my best wishes for your publication's continued success. I look forward to seeing many more issues of Calvinist Contact in the years to come.*

**Lily Munro,  
Minister of Citizenship  
and Culture,  
Toronto, Ontario**



are on par, reports De Koekkoek. This bit of information is important to Canadian CR churches which send or receive money to/from the denomination.

## December 15, 1946:

This issue reports that the Rev. Paauf of Vancouver has honoured a classical appointment to Houston by taking a return flight by plane, thus saving about two days of travel. "Modern inventions do indeed serve Kingdom purposes, especially when, as in this case, its workers are not afraid to take to the skies!"

"Heart strings are pulling to the Old Country," we read in the same issue. People are travelling by boat from New York to Holland. We know from the March, 1947, issue of C.C. that two brothers Wieringa, Lambert and Andries, from Neerlandia, left on February 23. Later historical accounts tell us that the reports by these brothers about the schism in the Dutch churches led to a split in the Neerlandia church, and the formation of the Canadian Reformed Church there.

Dutch war brides are discussed in several issues. Some of them have shown up in worship services in Winnipeg. Others have been lost track of. Everything possible should be done to reach them, counsels De Koekkoek.

## February 1947:

Immigration authorities are allowing four additional categories of immigrants, including farm labourers who have been assured farm employment. The flow of immigration that becomes a flood in the '40s can now begin. The CRC Synod of 1946 had appointed an immigration committee, which met in Winnipeg and Edmonton. The Christian Reformed Church is getting ready for an influx of new members!

## April 1947:

The first letter to the editor is published. It's from a W.C. Kooiman in Rock Valley, Iowa. He expresses surprise to read in a previous issue of C.C. that Columbus discovered America in 1942. "I must be getting old," he writes, "and forgetful, because I cannot remember that I ever heard anything about that at that time."

## June 1947:

The SS Waterman will arrive in Montreal about June 27 with 1,000 immigrants, mostly destined for Ontario. The next issue reports that the greatest increase from this shipful of immigrants was destined for Chatham: 200 arrivals. The church literally doubled in size overnight.

## September 1947 (Volume II, Number 12):

Some statistics on *The Canadian Calvinist*: This issue completes the second year of its publication. Its size has grown from one mimeographed sheet to eight pages closely printed. Circulation went up from 550 to 1,000; cost from \$7.50 to \$65.00 monthly. Its voluntary support has kept pace with expenses but needs increase. Its work has all been done on a non-profit basis, free of charge.

## November 1947:

"Born: twins, to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tigchelaar, October 31st, Hamilton." Although the names of the

twins are not mentioned, they are Dan and David Tigchelaar, both to become ministers of the gospel in the Christian Reformed Church.

## December 1947:

For the first time a "utility" corner that comes close to being advertising appears. A Mr. De Jong in Hamilton, a recent immigrant from Holland, makes wooden shoes. Says he, "Ik maak alle maten [I make all sizes]," and then he continues in English, "including some fancy ones if wanted." The wooden shoes can be ordered from Mrs. D. Van Delft.

## February 1948:

"Holland or English?" is the title of a brief article. With the influx of new

holding back — the result not always being unto edification. It seems that the oldtimers can afford to speed up a bit and the newtimers to slow down, for the chorale music should remain such in our churches. In that way there will be overall improvement in our singing, and we will all like it."

The same issue shows the following statistics regarding immigrant church attendance by family in Ontario:

Chatham .....	230
Erie .....	85
Sarnia .....	150
St. Catharines .....	200
Hamilton .....	200
Lindsay .....	50
Holland Marsh .....	80
Nestleton .....	65
Owen Sound .....	105

## The Man Paul De Koekkoek

Paul was born in Hillegom, The Netherlands in 1890, the fifth of 12 children. His father, he wrote in "Autobiography of a 90-year-old minister" (C.C., September 19, 1980) had a good mind, was well-read and an interesting conversationalist. His mother from the Zeeland province was "more emotional and 'diplomatic'."

At age 16, Paul was chosen delegate to the celebration of Dr. Abraham Kuyper's 70th birthday in The Hague, but his boss refused him time off.

At 17 he immigrated to the U.S.A., Leota, Minnesota, where he met and married Lena Wassen. While picking corn in the fall of 1913, he felt the call to the ministry of the Gospel. In 1923 he entered the ministry.

In 1945, 22 years later, Paul accepted a call to the Edmonton Christian Reformed Church. That same year he decided to start publishing *The Canadian Calvinist*. It's no wonder that he considered himself a positive activist. He was often called upon to mediate disputes.

The purpose of publishing a paper was to bring greater contact between the Canadian Christian Reformed groups and churches.

Retiring from the ministry in Zillah, Washington, where his beloved wife died, Paul settled in Seattle, Washington. He remarried in 1960.

When invited to several silver anniversaries of churches in Canada, he reminded people that their immigration was not to be an end in itself, but "part of their pilgrim journey to the City of God; the spiritual should not be lost in the natural."

De Koekkoek lived to be 92 years old. He passed away on November 13, 1983, when his house in Seattle caught fire and he was not able to escape due to smoke inhalation.

BW



immigrants, should *The Canadian Calvinist* have Dutch on its pages? No, says the editor. The Dutch church magazine *De Wachter* should increase, and *The Canadian Calvinist* should carry only English articles.

## May 1948:

The editor quotes an article from *Bible Christianity*, entitled "The Dutch Are Puzzled." Apparently the Dutch were puzzled about the Presbyterian Church in Canada. "What puzzles them is the marked difference in preaching and worship. They are used to doctrinal preaching and simplicity in worship. They find such a wide difference in the preaching of various ministers. One minister is very liberal and does not seem to believe the Bible while another is very orthodox and Calvinistic. Why is that?"

## October/November 1948:

A simple solution to a problem with congregational singing: "It has been observed in more than one church that our new immigrants are pushing towards more speed in the Holland Psalm singing and that others are

Pictou .....	150
Clinton .....	70
Trenton .....	200
Brockville .....	20
Renfrew .....	60
Cobden .....	35
Van Kleek Hill .....	30
Cornwall .....	20
Olinda .....	40
Kitchener .....	80
Ingersoll .....	70
Norval .....	35
Port Credit .....	35
Aylmer .....	90

Such places as Toronto, Almonte, Arnprior and Kemptville are not accounted for in these statistics.

It is noteworthy that this issue of *The Canadian Calvinist* for the first time carries a Dutch section entitled: "Korte Berichten Holland-Canada." (Brief Reports, Holland-Canada). The arrival of many "newtimers" from Holland seems to make this necessary.

## September 1949:

A new paper called *Contact* has been started in Ontario. It's a Dutch monthly

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# The Canadian Calvinist years: 1945-51

...continued from page 5.

published out of Trenton and Chatham by the Christian Reformed Immigration Society. Editor De Koekkoek remarks that the paper agrees with *The Canadian Calvinist* in its aims. He wonders if the constituency can afford to carry two papers. Also, why was there no consultation with *The Canadian Calvinist* before this new paper was initiated?

In the next issue, *Contact* replies to these remarks, with somewhat dubious integrity according to De Koekkoek. *Contact* says that *The Canadian Calvinist* is jealous, yet a little later it says that jealousy is not De Koekkoek's motivation. It then says 1) It will not compete with *The Canadian Calvinist* but complement it, 2) It will be able to sustain itself financially, 3) It wants to strengthen the work of immigration through cooperation, and 4) the stated aims of *The Canadian Calvinist* do not include immigration concerns.

Editor De Koekkoek is not impressed with these reasons. In practice his paper concerns itself with immigration matters, and all of *Contact*'s other goals could be achieved in *The Canadian Calvinist*. It seems that the Ontario fieldmen for the CR immigration societies, Vellinga and VanderVliet, want a more Ontario-oriented paper.

The same issue indicates a new address for *The Canadian Calvinist*. De Koekkoek has moved from Edmonton to Huntingdon, British Columbia.

## June 1, 1950:

There are discussions about the union of *The Canadian Calvinist* and *Contact*. From an article in the August 1950 issue of *The Canadian Calvinist* we gather that this is the result of overtures from it to *Contact* in February of this year. Representatives of both papers have met. They agree about the need to form one national Calvinistic paper, but they disagree on who should run such a paper. *The Canadian Calvinist* wants a board independent of any organization; in other words, it wants a free press. *Contact* wants the immigration societies to own and govern the new paper, to prevent a take-over of a special interest

group and to provide greater stability. Discussions will continue.

## July 1, 1950:

The Bowmanville Christian Reformed Church reports that "Mrs. G. Witvoet and six children" have arrived at Nestleton, Ontario. That should have been seven children, because Bert Witvoet, the present editor of *Calvinist Contact*, was also part of the family!

## August 1950:

This issue marks the fifth anniversary of *The Canadian Calvinist*. Editor De Koekkoek reflects on the past five years. He indicates that circulation stands at 3,250, but the deficit has also grown. Not all subscriptions are paid for. The paper is still partly dependent on free-will offerings.

## October 1950:

There is a letter from Syrt Wolters from Houston, B.C. He expresses disagreement with the editor on the question of the 1944 schism in the Gereformeerde Kerken in Holland. He argues against a pluralistic idea of the church as propagated in the North American church press.

## December 1950:

The first meeting of the Canadian classis, Classis Ontario, will take place in Hamilton on December 6.

The editor notices that the Yearbook of the CRC shows two CR churches in Canada in 1910. In 1920 there were nine, but this number went down to five in 1930. In 1940 the number increased to 12, and the 1950 Yearbook reports 29 churches. The next yearbook will show 40 congregations, predicts the editor.

The December issue shows an enlarged publishing committee, and the subscription fee now stands at \$1.25 per year. *The Canadian Calvinist* has returned to Edmonton, the place of its birth. Paul De Koekkoek is still the editor, though he continues to serve a church in Huntingdon, B.C. The Rev. John Hanenburg from Edmonton is managing editor.

## September 1951:

This is the last issue of *The Canadian*

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The September, 1951 issue of *Contact* ran this Dutch advertisement for Zellers. Ladies winter coats ran from \$19.98 to \$29.98 and children's snowsuits started at \$7.98.

*Calvinist*. The issue of its union with the *Contact* has been settled and readers are urged to subscribe to the new magazine, which will be called *Calvinist-Contact*. The hyphen indicates the hybrid nature of the new paper. It will be published in Chatham, Ontario, twice a month, instead of once. Both English and Dutch will be used. The price of the bi-monthly will be \$3.00 a year. The new venture will be owned and directed by the immigration societies.

It seems that the view held by the editors and workers of *Contact* has prevailed. In fact, the first new issues maintain the bold heading of "Contact" with "Calvinist" added in smaller type. An objective reader would, we think, award the prize of humility to Paul De Koekkoek of *The Canadian Calvinist*.

## Conclusion

Much of the content of *The Canadian Calvinist* dealt, understandably, with the Christian Reformed Church, immigration and other matters that gave the paper a rather inward look. But one must admire the spunky yet peaceful character of a man like Paul De Koekkoek. His vision of what *The Canadian Calvinist* should become was broader than what most clergy of his time envisioned.

He never made a penny while doing his editorial work; he probably lost

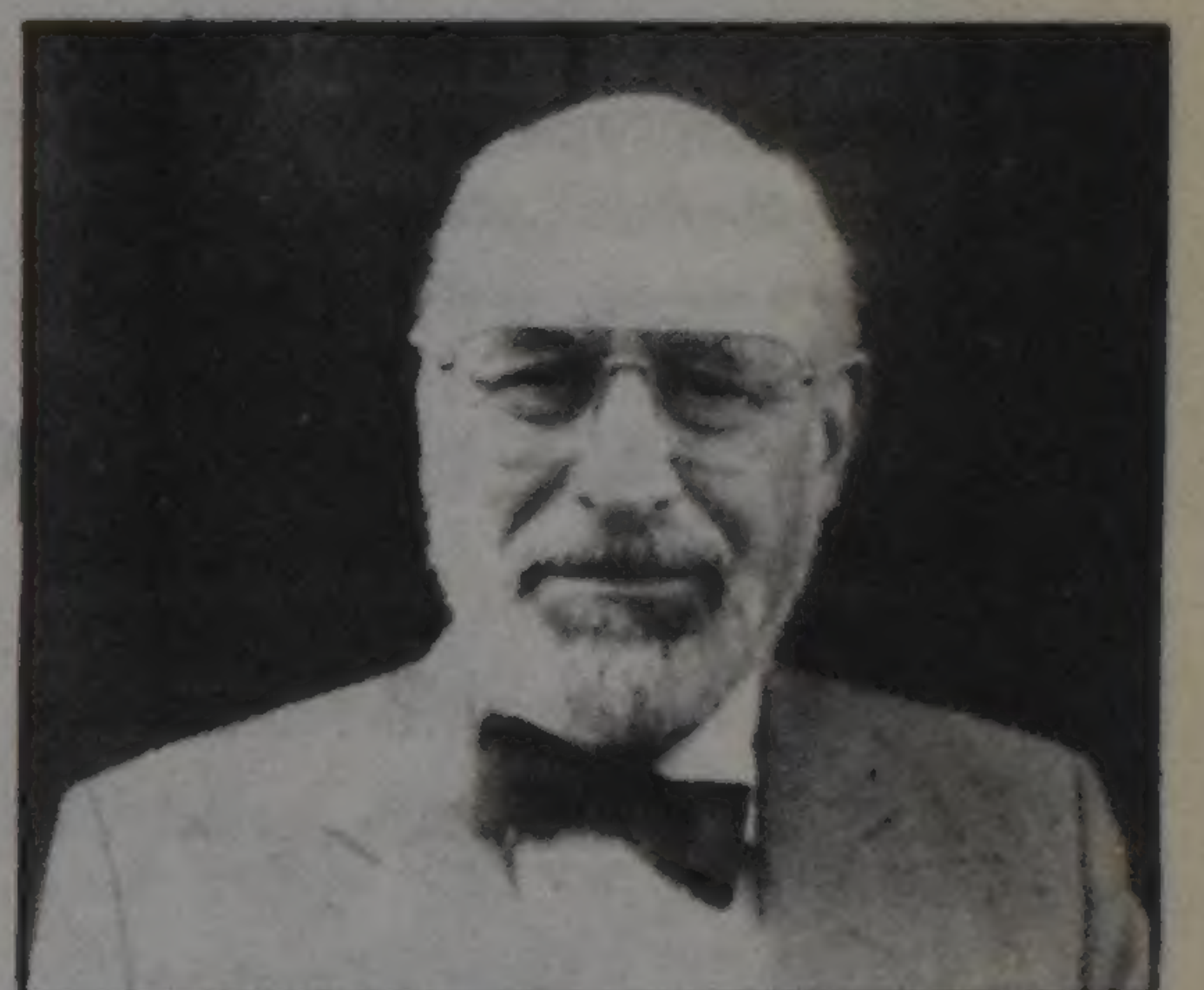
money in the process.

Some people in the West, till today, will not subscribe to *Calvinist Contact* because of the manner in which their paper had been "usurped" by the Eastern sons of Christian Reformed mothers.

## An orientation paper

At the time, immigration brought us all a big surprise. Most of us had never given much thought to the notion of ethnicity, but now we suddenly found ourselves members of an ethnic group, the Dutch Canadians!

After a short while we began to experience that ethnic affiliation is extremely important during the transition from belonging to one nation to being part of another. That ethnic affiliation found a clear and significant expression in, and received its truly needed affirmation from, *Calvinist Contact*.



True, for those immigrants reared in the Reformed tradition, there was also the church, and its role should certainly not be underestimated during the transition from there to here! Still, life is broader and more encompassing than the church, especially when it comes to the concrete orientation in the situation from one day to the next.

It is precisely in the orientation that *Calvinist Contact* provided for Dutch Canadians in the Reformed tradition that one recognizes its importance. As long as the transition period will not be fully completed, our magazine will have its place. That'll take another generation at least.

Congratulations!

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## An Ontario Dutch immigrant paper

# Two years of *Contact*: 1949-1951

Bert Witvoet

The first issue of *Contact* appears in August of 1949. From the beginning it is clear that people with good business sense are in charge. Owned and operated by the Christian Reformed Immigration Societies in Eastern Canada, it is entirely in Dutch. Editorial matters are to be sent to Trenton, Ontario, where fieldman John VanderVliet resides. Business matters go to Chatham, where fieldman John Vellinga lives. The paper is published in Chatham. A subscription to *Contact* will cost \$1.00 a year.

The first article in its first issue is entitled "Ons Eigen Orgaan" (Our Own Organ). Most Dutch immigrants settled in Ontario, it says. This paper wishes to strengthen the ties between these new immigrants. It sees no competition between itself and *The Canadian Calvinist*. Each one has its own task. The task of *Contact* is more specifically geared toward immigration.

Later issues show, in fact, a practical approach to immigrant life in Canada. The full use of the Dutch language was very important to recent immigrants from The Netherlands.

Rev. Adam Persenaire writes in this first issue that the immigrants should guard themselves against a saltless Canadianization, but, while becoming good Canadians, maintain the wholesome character of their Dutch and Calvinistic inheritance.

### October 8, 1949:

Editor John VanderVliet tries to justify the existence of *Contact*. He talks about the birth of a baby, at which everyone rejoices, except one neighbour who has a four-year-old child (*The Canadian Calvinist*). According to the editor, *The Canadian Calvinist* exists to promote the Reformed confessions and to present news reports. *Contact* wants to specialize in immigration settlement and promotion. There should be no

problem. *Both* can exist side by side. Besides, Dutch immigrants are used to reading many papers, says the editor.

### January 1950:

*Contact* encourages the placing of "small advertisements." This is the beginning, in fact, of the classifieds. Birth - marriage - anniversary - announcements and obituaries will cost 15 cents per line. The first classifieds appear in the March 1950 issue. The Wiersmas in Puslinch, Ontario, announce the birth of daughter Sylvia Ilene, and the Kaptijns from Elmvale, Ontario, the birth of son Cornelis.

### March 29, 1950:

This issue carries the first English section. It's for young people, edited by Rev. Adam Persenaire.

The Eleven Lakes and Eleven Towns Race in Holland were almost held, says a report, but it started to rain and one could skate on the roads. Naughty tongues have it that the Dutch have taken their own weather along to Canada.

Farmer to immigrant Bill, "Bill, put the bull in the stable." After a while the farmer notices the bull still in the meadow and Bill is busy polishing things in the stable. He thought he had to "poets the boel in de stable" (polish the stuff in the stable).

# CONTACT

THE LEADING HOLLAND-CANADIAN  
MAGAZINE IN CANADA

2nd Year of Pub.

DECEMBER 1950

No. 16

## Eere Zij God In Den Hooze

Photo courtesy Chatham News



Stille nacht, Heilige nacht  
Davids Zoon, lang verwacht  
Die tot God ons terug brengen zal  
Werd geboren in Bethlehems stal  
Hij der schepselen Heer.

### July 1950:

The first letter to the editor is from a Mrs. W. Brouwer from Sarnia. She disagrees with a Mr. den Hartog about the conduct of Canadians. The latter has not yet discovered any good manners among Canadians. Mrs. Brouwer points out that Canadians are friendly and less critical and gossip-oriented than some Dutch people.

Women's Corner Editor Edith provides immigrant women with practical advice. What do our children do on those lengthy trips to and from church? Let them count animals. A cow gets two points, a horse five, a flock of chickens five, a dog that walks backwards 25 points. In addition Edith provides recipes.

### August 1950:

Rev. John Gritter talks about the need for more English in the worship services. Those churches who are able to hold two services are urged to begin the day with English services. But English sermons should not be long, he counsels. The language difficulty must not tire us out too much.

This is the first anniversary issue of *Contact*. A steady increase of subscriptions means that 2,000 copies are now printed. The editor does not want to boast. He is grateful for God's help.

### September 1950:

A report on the cost of funerals says that it's the elaborate coffins that make Continued on page 9 ...

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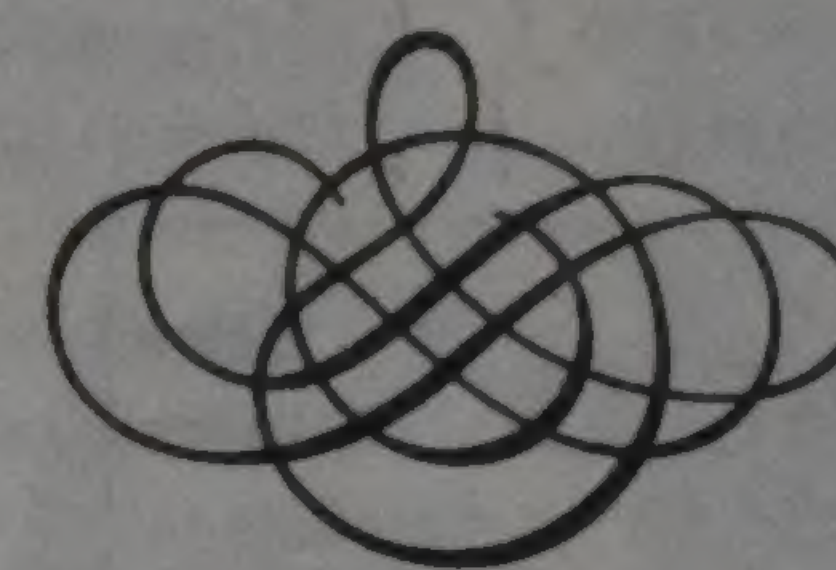
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# Two years of *Contact*: 1949-1951

... continued from page 7.  
funerals expensive. The most austere coffin costs \$180.00.

## December 1950:

The strength of *Contact* begins to lie more and more in its advertising. This issue shows almost 45% advertising, including New Year's wishes. It even has an ad from William Dam Seeds, located in Sarnia, Ontario, at this time. Talk about longevity!

## January 1951:

Featured here is the first long obituary that one associates with *Calvinist Contact*. The deceased is Hendrikje A. Nicolai, wife of Wytse Posthumus from Eestrum, The Netherlands. Many of her 14 children, who are all mentioned with spouses and place of residence, live near Owen Sound, Ontario.

## March 1951:

This issue of *Contact* has a larger format. It's the same size as *The Canadian Calvinist*, which changed format a year earlier. The thickness and quality of paper are better than before.

The increase of letters to the paper makes it necessary for the editor to shorten some of them. There must be room for articles, argues the editor, and he wants to prevent letters from lying around too long.

## July 1951:

Rev. and Mrs. Bert Mulder write an article about Nova Scotia. Mulder is at that time a minister of a Presbyterian church near Halifax. He and his wife are sometimes present when immigrants arrive from Holland.

## August 1951:

How times change! The front page features a tobacco kiln with workers. The second page carries an article entitled "Tabak dat edele kruid" ("Tobacco, that noble weed").

A second article warns about the dangers of Canada's highways. This article reveals that in some ways times do not change. Immigrants too become victims of traffic mishaps. Let's not play with our precious lives, counsels Editor Vander Vliet.

Chatham CRC celebrated its 25th anniversary on July 19, 1951. The first immigrants arrived there in 1925. Rev. J.R. Brink from Grand Rapids visited those few families that year. He met some children in the street and spoke Dutch to them. The children ran home and told their mother that a minister

who spoke Dutch was on his way. Mother cried for joy and knew that the next Sunday was going to be very good, reports an article in this issue of *Contact*.

## September 1951:

Some Dutch immigrants spoil it for others, writes a fieldman. He received a letter from a Canadian farmer, who wrote:

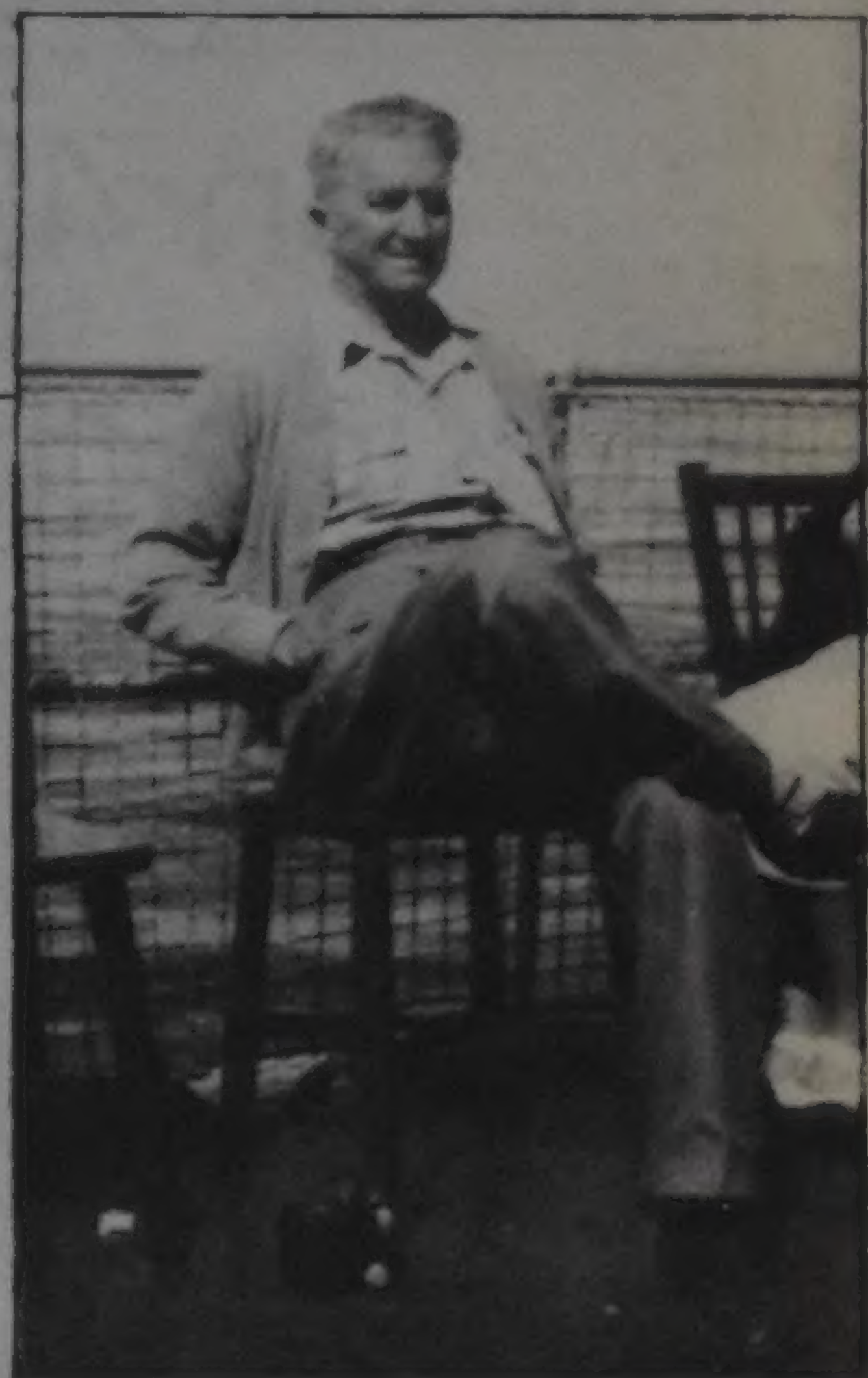
Sept. 3, 1951

Last Sunday the ..... family reached

..... and yesterday some relatives of theirs came here. This morning, Monday, Mrs. .... [wife of immigrant] left with the children to ....., Ontario not to return. Mr. .... [the man] is staying a short time. This is a terrible blow for me. I spent over \$100 for them on furniture, radio, etc. I have 640 acres. It's very urgent for me to have help. Will you kindly do all you possibly can to get me help?

This is the last issue of *Contact*. After this, *The Canadian Calvinist* and *Contact* become one paper. There is no

mention of the merger in this issue. It appears that the editor wants to give the readers of *Contact* a sense of continuity, as if *Contact* is not really going to cease publication.



## The man John Vander Vliet

John was born in Vuren, The Netherlands, in 1896. He became a teacher, but during the First World War he joined the Dutch army and was commandant of a border detachment from 1914 till 1920.

Wedding bells rang out on August 2, 1923, when he and Alida Ruys from Haarlem exchanged vows. Since openings for teachers were scarce in the early twenties, John began to think of Canada. In April 1926, John immigrated to Woodstock, Ontario, where he was joined by his wife and two children in July.

A bout with tuberculosis for both John and his daughter created great hardship the family. But they persevered. In 1947 they moved to Trenton, where they remained till the end of their lives.

Vander Vliet became well-known among Dutch immigrants for his work as Ontario fieldman for the Christian Reformed Immigration Society. He also became the editor of *Contact* in 1949, as well as editor of *Calvinist-Contact* from 1951-1953.

He was active in starting the Dutch Credit Union, helped the Trenton Christian School get started, and was appointed vice-consul for The Netherlands in 1958.

Respected by many, John Vander Vliet passed away in 1973 at age 78. His wife died two years later.

BW

## A loaf of bread and a C.C., please

*Imagine the busy offices of "Calvinist Contact 40 years hence. The editor sits at a computer terminal scanning the day's stories sent in by reporters from across Canada and around the globe. She notes with some satisfaction the guest editorial mailed in just that morning, commenting on the recent graft high in government circles and pointing to the need for integrity in human lives. The editorial further develops the theme of government responsibility to provide an environment in which its citizens can flourish and grow and where justice and compassion are integral elements of good government.*

*A staff meeting later that afternoon opens with prayer. The circulation manager notes with some satisfaction that subscriptions are steadily climbing and additional street boxes have been ordered. Someone else questions the feedback on an article about Canada's aid to the Soviet Union.*

*Sound a little far-fetched or pie-in-the-sky? Perhaps, but it is part of a broader vision for Calvinist Contact as it stands on the threshold of its 40th year. Birthdays are for celebrating, for reflecting, for looking back and giving thanks ... and walking confidently into the future.*

*Calvinist Contact has always been a paper tailored to serve the community from which it sprang. It was an important element in those early years when waves of immigrants settled in Canada and sought to establish the infrastructure they needed to live their lives in a new country.*

*Calvinist Contact was the vehicle through which they kept each other informed on developments in their families and in their communities. Succeeding generations called the paper theirs and used its pages to keep in touch and, as time went on, to address themselves to the Canadian social, political and economic experience.*

*Calvinist Contact readers are now involved members in the fabric of Canadian society. The paper still serves their needs as they strive to let their Christian point of view be heard and as they continue to build communities where the Christian witness has some impact, not just for themselves, but for all Canadians.*

*Who knows what the future will bring? Will the vision of a Christian daily be realized? Only God knows. His faithfulness to His people has always been apparent. In a society where information has become a key commodity, it is absolutely essential that there be a medium where the gatekeepers are motivated by a love for Christ and a knowledge of what that means specifically for the business of newsgathering and reflection.*

*Happy birthday, C.C.!*

**Ellen Zwart,  
Chairperson of the  
Editorial Advisory Board,  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario**

## The man John Vellinga



Although he was not an editor of *Contact* or *Calvinist-Contact*, John Vellinga played a leadership role in the early days of the paper.

He was born in 1906 in IJlst, The Netherlands. At age 20, John left Friesland and immigrated to Canada, where he settled in Chatham. There he met and married Hillechina (Jean) Koning. Together they had 11 children.

The depression years were difficult for the Vellingas, but they survived by doing assorted jobs, among others, farming.

During the late '40s and early '50s, John was fieldman for the Christian Reformed Immigration Society. For many post-war Dutch immigrants he was their first contact.

With John Vander Vliet, Vellinga started the Dutch immigrant paper *Contact*. Vellinga looked after administration and publishing. After *Calvinist-Contact* moved to Hamilton, Vellinga started another Dutch Canadian weekly known as *Hollandia News*. In the late '70s, this paper was sold.

In the mid '50s, Vellinga also established an insurance agency and travel service. The insurance agency was sold, but the travel agency is still run by his sons.

An obviously enterprising man throughout his life, John Vellinga passed away in December 1974. His wife passed away in 1980.

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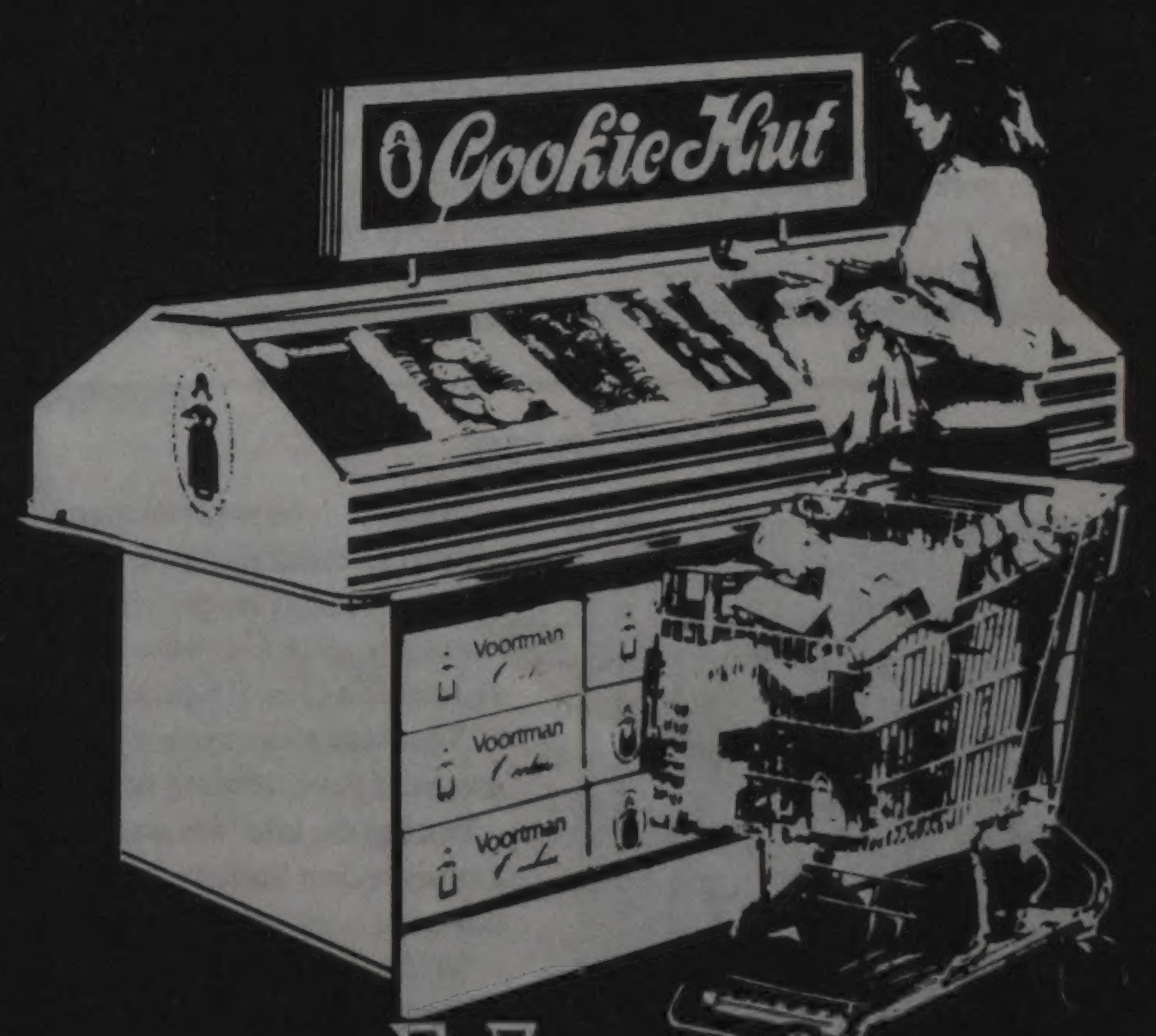
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# Calvinist-Contact in the fifties: 1951-1959

## A tale of three editors

Bert Witvoet

The next phase in the history of *Calvinist Contact* involves the successive editorships of three people: John VanderVliet (who was the editor of *Contact*), John Gritter (then pastor of the London Christian Reformed Church), and Ad. Otten (professional journalist from Holland). The last one was in charge of editorial matters for five of the nine years of this period.

October 15, 1951, is the first combined issue of *The Canadian Calvinist* and *Contact*. Published in Chatham, it is fairly obvious that *Contact* rather than having merged with *The Canadian Calvinist* has absorbed it. It is somewhat ironic that John VanderVliet, now also the editor of the new paper, deemed it important to work together in one paper, whereas before, when *Contact* was started, he did not think the aims of *Contact* could have been realized in

*The Canadian Calvinist*.

John Vellinga reveals in this issue that *Contact* had 2,900 subscribers and *The Canadian Calvinist*, 400. (The latter had more readers, but it did not enforce payment of subscriptions.) This makes for a total of 3,300 subscribers and a mailing list total of 4,700. He says too that if 5,000 people subscribe, the new paper may soon become a weekly. Now it is a bi-monthly.

## Vander Vliet's editorship continues (1951-1952)

A few snatches from this period of C.C.'s history will show that there were no critical issues for discussion. The excitement and anxiety of immigrant life continue. For some they begin.

### Nov. 19, 1951:

An anniversary ad reflects the joy and pain of immigration: "Far from all relatives, our parents M. Oldejans and R. Oldejans-Hofsink, hope, the Lord willing, on November 18, to remember the day on which they were united in marriage 25 years ago. Their grateful children: Jan and Ali, Henk, Gerrit, Henni, Ali. Clute, Ont., Nov. 1951." The celebrants had left a major city in Holland and had arrived in Northern Ontario bushland only a few months earlier.

### December 15, 1951:

This issue features an advertisement for life insurance with a certain Dick Farenhorst in Chatham, Ontario. This Mr. Farenhorst eventually becomes the editor of *Calvinist Contact*.

### May 1, 1952:

The Dutch Queen Juliana visited Canada and paid several informal, unannounced visits to immigrants living near Hamilton and Chatham.

"I want to see my people at work, without disturbing them," said the Queen to reporters. She dropped in on immigrants working in the fields, children going to school, mothers being at home." *The London Free Press* reported that tears came to the eyes of Dutch women who saw her. The Queen at the end of her visit said, "My people are happy here. They have a good living. I am so glad for them."

The same issue carries an article by the Rev. J.K. Van Baalen about the shameful practice of chewing gum during church services. He quotes the following poem to drive his point home:

*A gum-chewing girl  
And a cud-chewing cow —  
There is a difference,  
I will allow.  
What is the difference?  
I have it now —  
It's the thoughtful look  
On the face of the cow!*

### June 15, 1952:

Mr. F.P. Fuikschot, sent out by the International Christian Labour Movement, has been appointed Secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.



### July 15, 1952:

A front-page article reveals that Egerton Ryerson, famous Canadian educator and missionary, was the son of a Dutch immigrant family, originally called Reyerzoon. It uses this historical fact as an encouragement for another Dutch immigrant boy in Port Arthur, who was ridiculed for coming to school the first day in wooden shoes.

### August 1, 1952:

An editorial laments the behaviour of immigrants in church. They did not behave that way in The Netherlands; why here in Canada? They dress poorly, sometimes enter church smoking, and talk loudly before the service. In one church the organist decided that no one was listening anyway, so she stopped playing. At once the noise of voices could be heard distinctly, and a shrill woman's voice proclaimed loudly, "I always

fry my meat on Saturdays." What is needed, says editor Vander Vliet, is a course in church going.

At this time there is no Canadian television station yet, we read, but the CBC is wisely studying American stations before it hopes to broadcast programs in September of this year.

### September 15, 1952:

Rev. John Van Harmelen describes a trip he took across Canada. He still lives in Holland, but arrived on the immigrant ship "Groote Beer," which some immigrants later dubbed the "Root Beer."

With the end of 1952, the editorship of John VanderVliet also ends. Perhaps the burden of immigration work keeps him from the editorial work required by *Calvinist-Contact*. He will continue to write articles about immigration for the paper.

## The man John Gritter

John Gritter was born in Vroomshoop, The Netherlands, in 1894. His father was a peat merchant, who would transport his fuel on a flat boat. But it was difficult to make ends meet for a family of 11 children (a 12th child was born later). The family decided to immigrate to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where a strong settlement of Reformed people would make the transition less hazardous.

A few years after their arrival, John attended Calvin College and Calvin Seminary, being ordained to the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church in 1924. He married Jeanette Schoolland, daughter of Professor Klaas Schoolland.

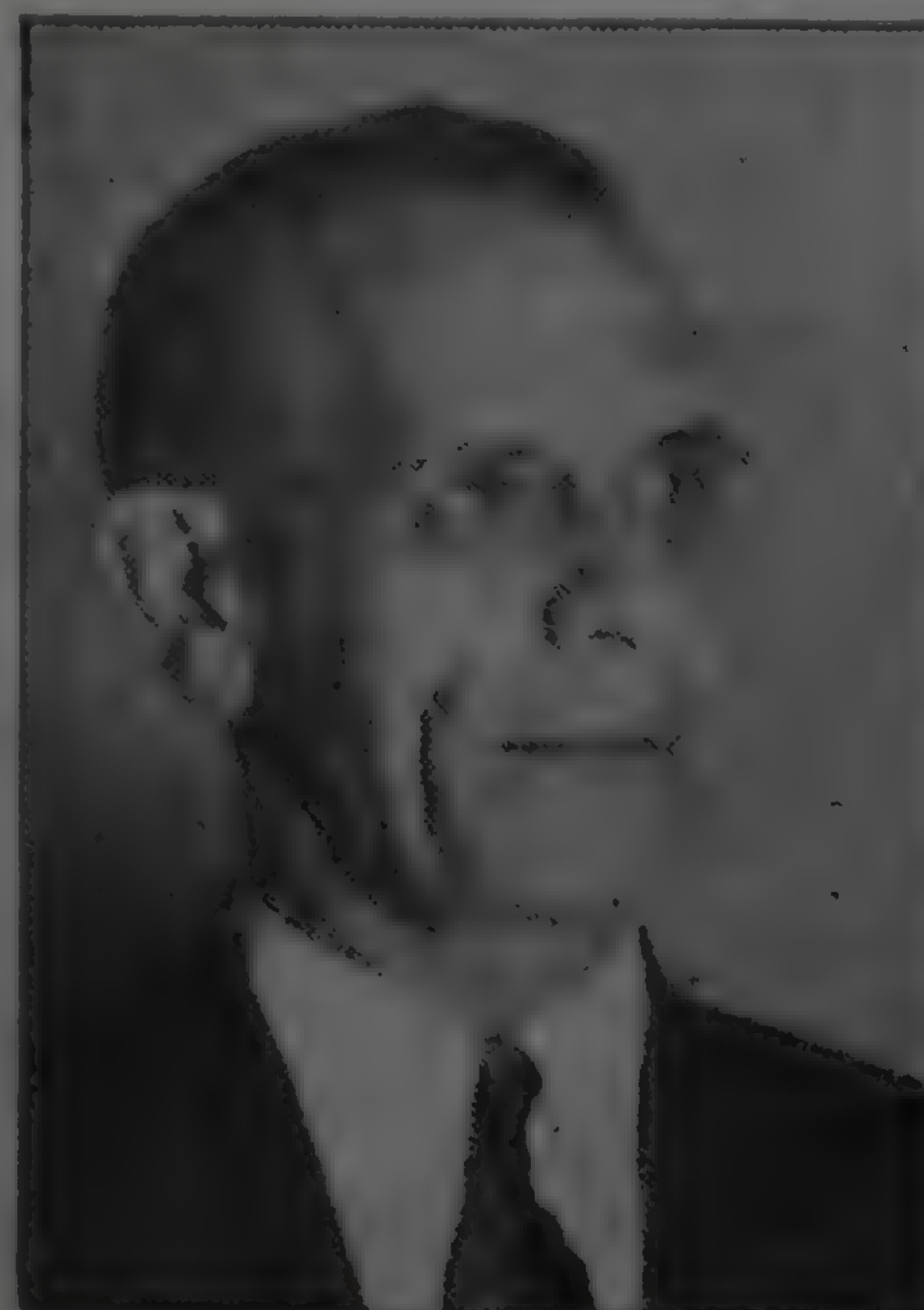
He served the churches of Prosper-Falmouth, Michigan; Rock Valley, Iowa; Franklin Street, Grand Rapids. In 1948, he worked as a home missionary in Aylmer, Ontario, for a while, and afterwards assumed a pastorate in London, Ontario. It was here that he started writing for *Contact*, and for a brief spell became the editor of *Calvinist-Contact* (1953-1954).

He wrote of his experiences during the early days of post-war immigration in the pages of *Calvinist-Contact*. He also published a book entitled *God Loves*.

In 1952 he accepted a call to Jamestown, Michigan, and retired in 1964.

Gritter was known for his "quiet demeanor, his Christian character, and his fatherly advice." (C.C., January 7/14, 1971). He died of a brain tumor on December 18, 1970.

BW



## John Gritter: becomes interim editor (1953-1954)

The January 15 issue of 1953 reflects change of editorship. The Rev. John Gritter from London, Ontario, is the new editor. The July 15 issue of this year announces a publication committee consisting of: Rev. A. Persenaire (President), Mr. J. VanderVliet (Secretary), Rev. P. De Koeckkoek, Rev. J. Hanenburg, Rev. J. Rubingh, Mr. J. Van Staalduinen, Mr. H. A. Wieringa.

### Dec. 1, 1953:

According to a report, 13 ministers so far have come from The Netherlands to take on pastorates in Canada.

The editor points to some differences between Dutch ministers and American

Continued on page 12 ...



# Calvinist-Contact in the fifties: 1951-1959

... continued from page 11.

ministers. Dutch ministers bring with them insight into their own people, a strong principal approach, experience of a rich cultural deployment of Calvinistic principles. American ministers understand the history and place of the Christian Reformed Church, are principled but also very practical. They tend to be more overwhelmed by problems.

We should not see these differences as two directions but as being complementary, writes Gritter. "We are going to seek out each other, talk with each other and respect each other."

## January 1, 1954:

Paul De Koekkoek welcomes the American ministers. (Gritter welcomed the Dutch ones in the previous issue). They too sacrificed much by coming here, says De Koekkoek.

## February 15, 1954:

The front cover, featuring a school bus picking up children, is identical to the front cover of the January 1, 1952, issue. A reader writes a sarcastic letter, asking, "If now you feel compelled to use the same school bus twice, what can we expect when you become a weekly?" The editor explains that he was not the editor two years ago and that there will be a good supply of new pictures, should C.C. become a weekly.

Being an editor is not so easy, writes Gritter. Every other week he takes the bus from London to Chatham, works in a crowded business office for a few hours to check articles and prepares them for the next issue. He readily admits that the paper is put together by amateurs.

## April 15, 1954:

The Dutch government has promised free travel expenses and transportation of furniture to ministers who accept a call to a church in Canada composed of Dutch immigrants.

## Look to the future

*Calvinist Contact* has served the post-war Reformed immigrant community well as a sounding board and vehicle through which we stayed informed about developments across Canada.

At this stage, *Calvinist Contact* should not become a kind of nostalgic communicator, but a paper that looks to the future, prepared to give direction to a community that is developing its own identity in serving the Lord.

Keep up the good work.

**Martin Vander Meulen,**  
A reader and businessman  
Calgary, Alta.



Editor Gritter unwittingly used a front page cover for the February 15, 1954, issue that had been used before in 1952.

## June 15, 1954:

While Rev. and Mrs. Gritter are in Holland for a visit, the Rev. K. Hart is the temporary editor. He writes an editorial about the difference between thinking, "Church, State and Society" and thinking, "Church, School and

Society." The one is a Dutch way of looking at our task, the other a North American way. Let's not forget our political task, he counsels.

## July 1, 1954:

From now on *Calvinist-Contact* will be printed and mailed by Bosch &

## Journalist Otten takes over (1954-1959)

It is clear that *Calvinist-Contact* is headed for more professional days. Mr. Ad. Otten, who has had journalistic experience in Holland, will be asked to assist the editorial committee. The committee pledges that *Calvinist-*

*Contact* will never become a profitable venture for a few individuals, or the voice of a specific church or party. It is the paper of and for the immigrants who started it.

## C.C. becomes a weekly

The October 1 issue announces the big news that C.C. will become a weekly. The change will begin with the next issue, which will appear on October 22. That issue, also has, for the first time, the tabloid format C.C. still has today. Its paper is of newsprint quality. The front page is more news-oriented.

And what is the news that hits the front page here? A report and picture of the destruction wrought by Hurricane Hazel in the Holland Marsh area.

The difference between C.C.'s news coverage in 1954 and in 1985 is that the earlier coverage is a Dutch rewrite of what could be found in the Canadian press. Today, C.C. tends to report in English on events the secular press ignores or gives a different slant to.

## Mixed business

Readers discuss the use of Dutch or English. A Mr. D. Meerkerk from Smithers, B.C., warns against the almost exclusive use of Dutch in the paper. We will lose our youth, he says. Let's as soon as possible become *Canadian Calvinists*. A certain M.B. from New Brunswick offers a different point of view. We can read all the English we want in other papers, he writes.

A humorous poem in the April 15 issue captures the predicament C.C. is in. We reprint the first verse:

*Mengelmoes*  
I'm glad to meet you, Sir,  
I am Calvinist Contact.  
Mijn naam is ook mijn ideaal;  
dat hebt U wel ontdekt.  
As a Calvinist I want to join  
the colours of my King,  
En als Contact leg ik een band  
om de belijderskring.

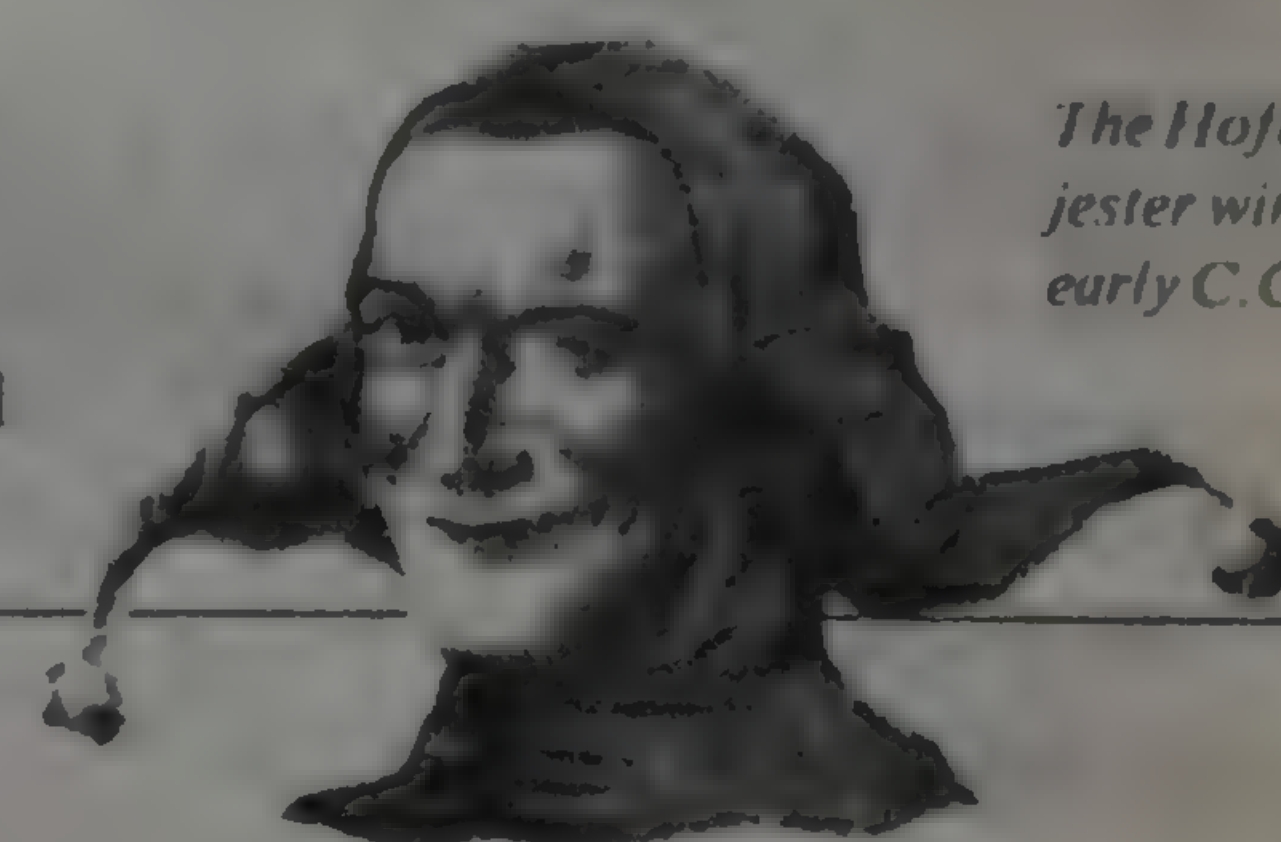
Keuning (Canada) Ltd. in Hamilton, Ontario. This firm also publishes *Home and Family*. The publishing director of this company is Mr. Dick Farenhorst.

The change is necessary for financial reasons. Two companies enter a bid on the future printing of C.C. Mercury Press of Chatham, which up till now has done the work, and Bosch and Keuning. The latter company enters the lower bid. This means the paper will move to Hamilton. Mr. Lucas Koops will be the new business manager.

C.C. has 3,200 subscribers at the beginning of 1954. The owners of C.C. are still the Christian Immigration Societies. There is a debt of \$3,000. Editorial responsibilities will be divided among four ministers: J. Gritter, F. Guillaume, K. Hart and T.C. Van Kooten.

Mr. J. Koning of the Mercury Press in Chatham is thanked for having so faithfully printed and distributed C.C. in the past.

And with that, the brief editorship of John Gritter comes to an end.



The Hofnar cigar jester winks from early C.C. pages.

## Publishing news:

April 22, 1955, contains a C.C. publication committee report to the Christian Reformed Immigration Societies. The paper is growing slowly but finances present problems. Ad. Otten is called the managing editor of C.C. The editorial office is in Toronto, where he lives.

September 23, 1955, announces an increase in subscription rates. It's absolutely necessary. Since C.C., for principal reasons, does not accept beer and whisky advertisements, as do other immigration papers, its income is somewhat limited. The increase is \$1.00 per year, bringing the subscription price to \$4.00.

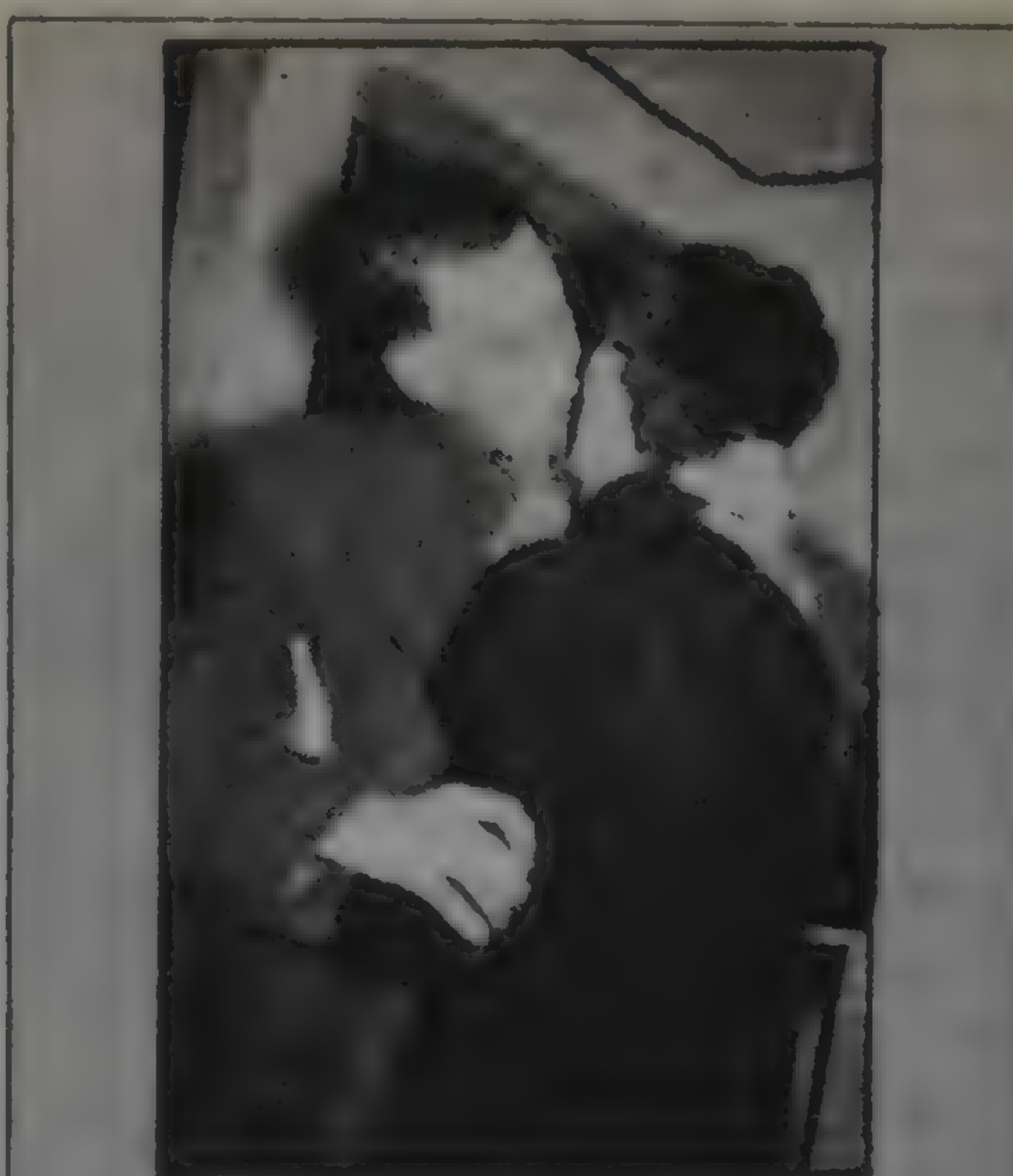
According to the June 8, 1956, issue, a new magazine *Church and Nation*, has sprung up under the editorship of Dr. M.H. Woudstra. Dr. Woudstra assumes personal responsibility for this paper, including finances. Ad. Otten explains that *De Wachter* and *The Banner* (Dutch and English Christian Reformed Church papers) have not responded well to requests to include more Canadian church news, and *Calvinist Contact* is not supposed to be a church paper; hence, *Church and Nation* has a right to exist. He wishes the new venture well.

## Immigration continues

June 8 also reports that the 120,000th immigrant from Holland has arrived on board the *Groote Beer* on May 31, 1956. The *Waterman* brought the first post-war Dutch immigrants to Canada nine years earlier, June 26, 1957.

In the same issue one can read a report about the "bad press" Canada has been receiving in Holland. An "intellectual couple" went to London, Ontario, where the man got a job that involved digging, and the woman was a cleaning lady in a hospital. They stayed for a half a year and returned to Holland to

Continued on page 14 ...



At last...

This is Janny and Fritz. Don't begrudge them this moment, they had to wait a long time for it. Already for a year Janny has sighed, "If only he would come." Finally KLM quickly brought him to Canada. We all treasure this moment with them and then modestly cast our glance elsewhere.

Perhaps some find this a little difficult. These are young men who say, "What good are Jannies who come to Canada engaged? No opportunity for us. You are somewhat right, boys. Therefore, brother fieldmen, send us many Jannies without rings. There are plenty of Fritzes here to make them happy.

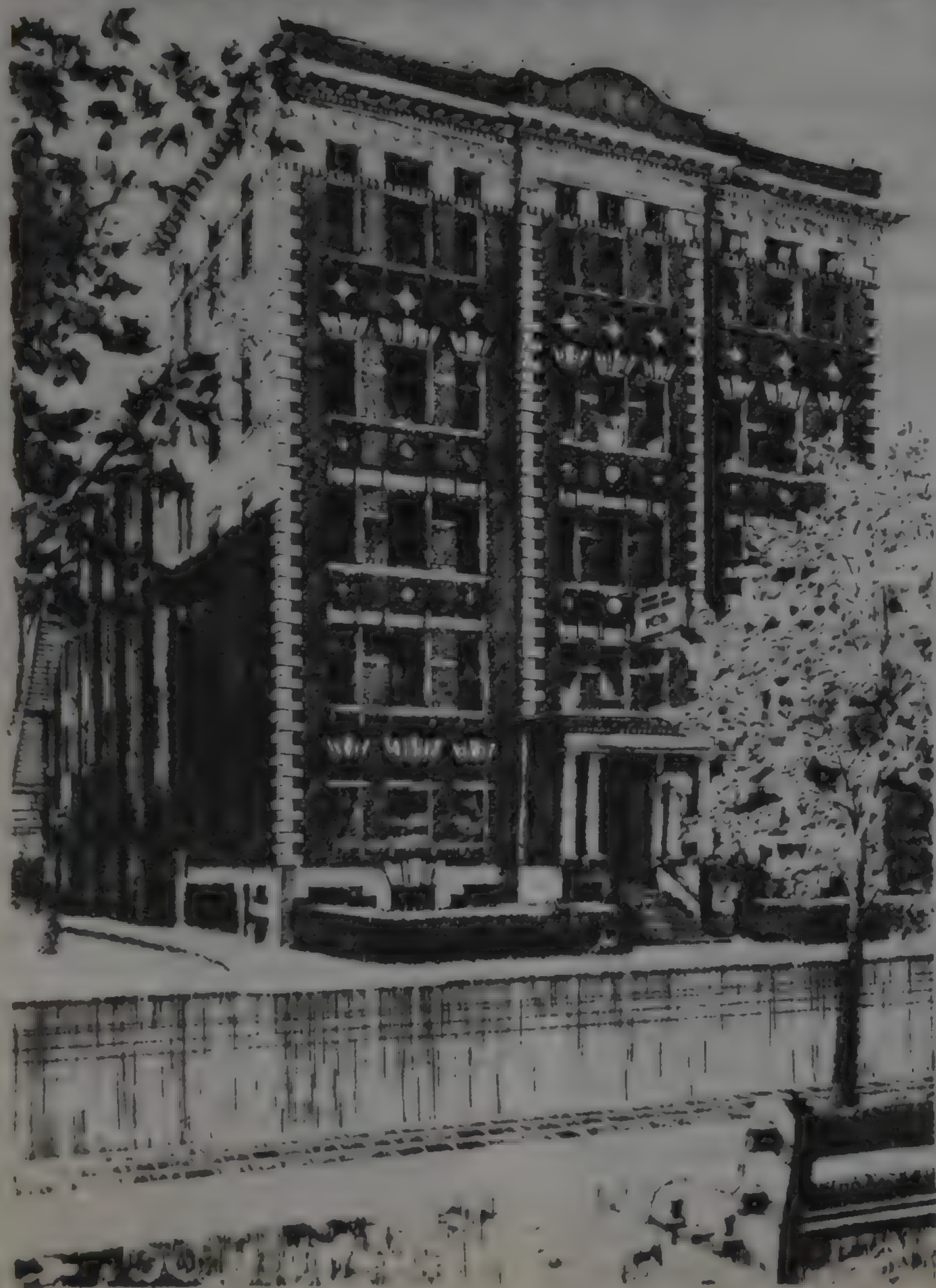
In the meantime, we are happy with Fritz for this royal reception. Welcome, fellow!

Taken from the  
June 15, 1954 issue  
of *Calvinist-Contact*



*"What ICS is doing will be far more significant 100 or 200 years from now than what it is even today!"*

Dr. Ian Rennie,  
Dean of Ontario Theological Seminary



With this issue Calvinist Contact celebrates 40 years of publication. For 30 of the years that CC has been the contact between Calvinists in this country, the Institute for Christian Studies has worked hard to make reformed scholarship come alive in Canada and elsewhere. It's been great working with you, CC.

Both CC and ICS look forward to the future. The Institute's reformational witness in the academic world has been strengthened by two new appointments to the teaching staff: Harry Fernhout in philosophy of education and Bill Rowe in history of philosophy.

With the appointment of Dr. Clifford C. Pitt as its new President, ICS has taken a bold new step forward. Dr. Pitt, an experienced and able educator/administrator, will spearhead a drive for growth and greater visibility for ICS. During the next five weeks ICS will publish a series of quotes by Dr. Pitt which illustrate his views on where ICS has been, is now and where it is going. They will also show why ICS is clearly the graduate school with a difference.

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# Calvinist-Contact in the fifties: 1951-1959

... continued from page 12.

recount their terrible experiences. An article about them in the Dutch press carried the following heading: "Everything in Canada revolves around the stinking dollar."

The articles goes on to describe Canadians as terribly selfish people, who would not think of helping anyone. "The only entertainment in Canada is watching television, which is turned on all day. Young and old are enslaved to it. The whole country thrives on buy-now-pay-later plans, and crime flourishes. The Canadian labourer hates the immigrant. Banks ask from 18 to 24% interest. When you ask a neighbour lady to babysit your child for a moment, the first thing she asks is, 'How much will you pay me for that?' Money, money and nothing but money. As immigrant it makes you sick."

Ad. Otten comments, "We can laugh about this article. Just continue

breathing."

## C.C. a lady?

According to the September 14 issue, 1956 is — suddenly — the 12th year of publication for C.C., whereas the issue before stated it was the 7th year of publication. An editorial explains the difference. Finally we realize the true age of C.C., says an editorial. Before this C.C. was, just like some ladies, older than it appeared to be. Instead of numbering from the first issue of *Contact*, C.C. should have numbered from the first issue of *The Canadian Calvinist*. The adjustment means that C.C. celebrates five birthdays at once, says Otten.

## 1956 in summary

Discussions this year in editorials and letters centre around the secular trade unions. The Christian Labour Union of Canada is in full swing. The Associa-



Calvinist-Contact published this kind of advertisement in the fifties without blushing!

tion for Reformed Scientific Studies has been established. There are discussions about whether Christian schools ought to be Christian Reformed to "safeguard" their character. Language problems also are discussed. "Keep your Dutch pure, en ga niet dat stuff opmixin."

## Tragedy in a new country

The August 23, 1957, issue reports on a tragic accident in Dresden, Ontario. Six Dutch immigrant men were killed as the walls of an excavation in which they were pouring cement collapsed on top of them. The victims were Enno Hovius, Wiebrand Hovius, Jan Oldewening, Jan Bremer, Hendrik Drenth and Dirk Rijkse. The first five were members of the Aylmer CRC, the last a member of the London CRC. The immigrant community is shocked by the grim reality of their "survival" existence.

## Our request will be granted!

September 3, 1957, features a letter sent by *Calvinist-Contact* to Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. The letter points out that those who are naturalized citizens do not have the same rights as citizens by birth. "Our only concern is to feel secure in our chosen citizenship," says the letter. Readers of C.C. have been urged to write to the government. A lawyer has been consulted about the matter of addressing the government.

In the next issue, readers show general agreement with the action initiated by C.C., although one person wonders if immigrants should stir things up.

The October 18 issue proclaims on its front page, "Ons verzoek wordt ingewilligd!" (Our request will be granted). Prime Minister Diefenbaker has passed the letter from C.C. on to Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Davie E. Fulton. The latter announced that the government is going to grant all citizens equal rights. An editor from a Canadian daily congratulates *Calvinist Contact* by telephone on the happy outcome. The action by C.C. and its readers has apparently helped to push the matter in the right direction.

## Certification problems for CLAC

March 7, 1958, reports that a CLAC local has been denied certification because it insists that workers profess Christian principles. Regular C.C. writer Dave Valstar believes that CLAC has to speak clearly on this issue. Apparently there is some confusion in various CLAC documents about this.

April 18 reports on a CLAC meeting in Hamilton at which lawyer Norman L. Mathews explains that certification is impossible as long as the CLAC has statements in its constitution that specifically point to the Bible and Christian principles. C.C. editor Ad. Otten is convinced that the CLAC will stand firm on its principles. A decision has to be made in the future.

In the May 9 issue a certain Ed VanderKloet from Sarnia, Ontario, (later Executive Secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Canada), writes that the National Executive Committee of the CLAC

## The man Ad. Otten

Born in Westerbork, The Netherlands, in 1925, Ad. (Adolf) Otten turned his thoughts to journalism after the Second World War. He soon became reporter and editor of a daily newspaper, the *Nieuwe Drentsche Courant*, in Assen, Holland.

While living in Holland he had from time to time received copies of the small bi-monthly magazine *Calvinist-Contact*, then prepared and published by fieldmen of the Christian Reformed Church, especially John VanderVliet and John Vellinga. These men, as well as several pastors who contributed articles to the magazine, were so busy during the early fifties with the settling of many new immigrants, that they could not at the same time make *Calvinist-Contact* an interesting and up-to-date publication.

The need for a more professional touch was obvious and Ad. Otten saw opportunities, both for himself as a journalist and for other newcomers to Canada, to have their own "newspaper" in the familiar old-country style. With this in mind he began to contact the editors and publishers of *Calvinist-Contact*, until in 1953 they cautiously encouraged him to "come over and help us."

Ad. Otten came to Canada with his wife Truus and baby daughter Irene on June 10, 1954.

But on the day of their arrival there was no one to meet the Ottens at Malton Airport. And after they had taken a taxi and settled in an upstairs Toronto apartment, they learned that things had taken a turn for the worst. Fieldmen and pastors had their hands full trying to find work and homes for the many immigrants. The economy had gone wrong and jobs were scarce.

No definite promises had been made and so Ad. Otten had to join the many job-hunters who daily on foot, by streetcar and (just then opened) subway searched the city for the few job opportunities that newspaper want-ads seemed to offer. It took five weeks to land his first job: gas pump attendant at Dibble Oil Co.

The vision of editing and publishing *Calvinist-Contact* in the form of a "newspaper" was kept alive, and later that fall there was an opportunity to present this in detail to a gathering of the "editorial committee" in Hamilton. It didn't take long for the committee members to agree that this young man was making a point, and that day they appointed him as "editorial secretary" with a "salary" of \$125.00 per month.

The office of *Calvinist-Contact* had shortly before been moved from Chatham, Ontario, to Burlington, where Lucas Koops managed the business side of the publication. The next year brought an opportunity to combine the editorial and business offices under one roof in the stately "Emigratiehuis" on Broadview in Toronto, where so many newcomers found temporary shelter in the gracious hospitality of Bill and Corrie Nagel.

The printing of *Calvinist-Contact* was done on the presses of Bosch & Keuning Ltd. (Canada) in Hamilton, later Guardian Publishing Co. This company, under management of Dick Farenhorst, took *Calvinist-Contact* under its wing in the beginning of 1957. Two years later Mr. Farenhorst became the editor, after Ad. Otten resigned.

A spiritual experience, later termed to be "pre-charismatic," convinced him that he would no longer carry the distinction of being a "Calvinist" and so he chose to make place for one who would be better suited to express the Calvinist viewpoint.

For those who remember Mr. Otten, it may be added that he is now the pastor of a house church in Woodstock, Ontario, while also being employed in property management and building maintenance.



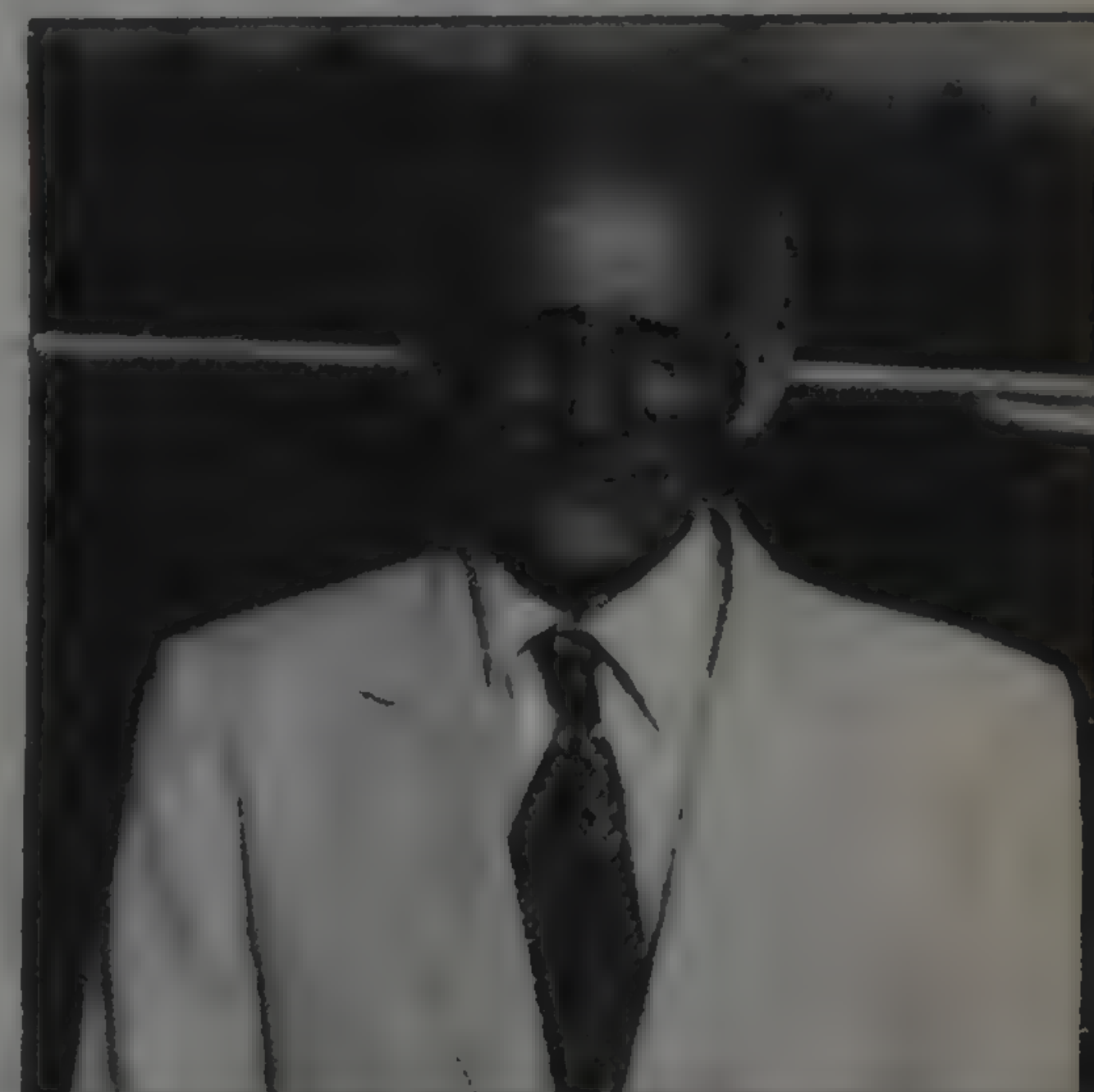
## Is C.C. chicken?

*In April 1955 we came to Canada as immigrants and settled down in the Brampton area. Already in Holland we were told that in this beautiful country of Canada there was a co-op insurance and a good Christian weekly. We took out a subscription right away.*

*Loving writing and reading, we always looked forward to receiving C.C. in the mail. I have written in it occasionally as a board member of the Christian Farmers Association and the Christian Labour Association.*

*Over the years, I have sold dozens of subscriptions to people, trying to convince them of the importance of C.C. I will promote it wherever I can. It is a good Christian newspaper, giving the right advice at the right time.*

*Is C.C. chicken sometimes? Only in that "chicken" stands for C.ool H.onest I.ntelligent C.lear-headed K.een E.nergetic and N.ot interested in bad writing.*



*May the Lord give to the staff, now at their 40th anniversary and in the future, strength to continue writing to His glory and for the upbuilding of our Christian faith.*

*What you are is God's gift to you. What you make of yourself is your gift to God.*

**Tom Lise,  
Promoter of C.C.,  
Drayton, Ont.**



# Calvinist-Contact in the fifties: 1951-1959

under the direction of Mr. Fuykschot is saying that CLAC should drop all references to the Bible and Christianity so that it may be certified. VanderKloet expresses the hope that the National Board of CLAC will not accept that recommendation.

The July 25 editorial by Otten worries about the upcoming CLAC convention of September 27. It notes that people of opposing views do not seem to be able to convince each other.

The September 5 issue publishes an open letter to the National Executive Committee of the CLAC. It is signed by five Christian Reformed pastors from B.C., who pleaded with the CLAC not to give in to government pressure by dropping constitutional references to the Word of God.

October 3 reports that the CLAC has maintained the stance that the Bible is the basis of its operations. The vote was 32 for and 18 against. The National Executive Committee resigned, as it had promised to do.

The November 7 issue announces that according to an open letter to members

of the CLAC, a meeting will be held in Hamilton on November 22 to establish a Christian Trade Union of Canada (CTUC). The initiative is taken by five Hamilton CLAC locals who do not agree with the decision taken at the September meeting of the CLAC. The Christian character of the new union will not be safeguarded by a reference to the Scriptures but by the deeds of its members.

November 28 reports that the CTUC has been begun by representatives of four locals separated from the CLAC. Mr. Fuykschot has been asked to be the executive secretary.

## A few miscellaneous matters

The April 5, 1958, issue carries the first C.C. children's page.

The July 25 issue rather innocently featured three potentially divisive issues: An editorial by Otten worries about the CLAC constitutional predicament, a report from Holland mentions that the Reformed Church in Holland has allowed women to serve in all church offices and two letter writers

ask for a more flexible approach to evolution.

The title over a letter in the June 19, 1959, issue reveals a Dutchism: "What did Social Credit?"

August 21 reports on Hamilton District Christian High, which for the first time offers a full-fledged educational program. The tuition fee is between \$1.50 and \$3.50, depending on distance of residence. School will be held in the "convenient rooms of the Mount Hamilton Christian Reformed Church."

## Otten resigns

The September 4 issue reveals that two gentlemen are in charge of editorial matters: Ad. Otten and Dick Farenhorst. By September 18, Otten has left and Farenhorst is in charge.

The October 9 issue offers a very brief explanation: "Hereby the Executive Committee regretfully informs the members of the *Calvinist-Contact* Publishing Association that Mr. Ad. Otten declared that he had come to convictions which differ from the



The first Young People's society in the Maritimes.

Calvinistic viewpoint as reflected in the editorial contents of *Calvinist Contact*. Mr. Otten therefore has requested to be discharged from his editorial responsibility of our paper. The Executive Committee has accepted his resignation."

The resignation is more than a surprise for those readers who enjoyed reading Ad. Otten's pointed editorials. His editorship was crowned by an extraordinary initiative to change immigration laws in Canada. It was further marked by a strong editorial position during the strife that developed (especially in the Hamilton area) around the question of CLAC certification.

## Spell out: Jesus is Lord

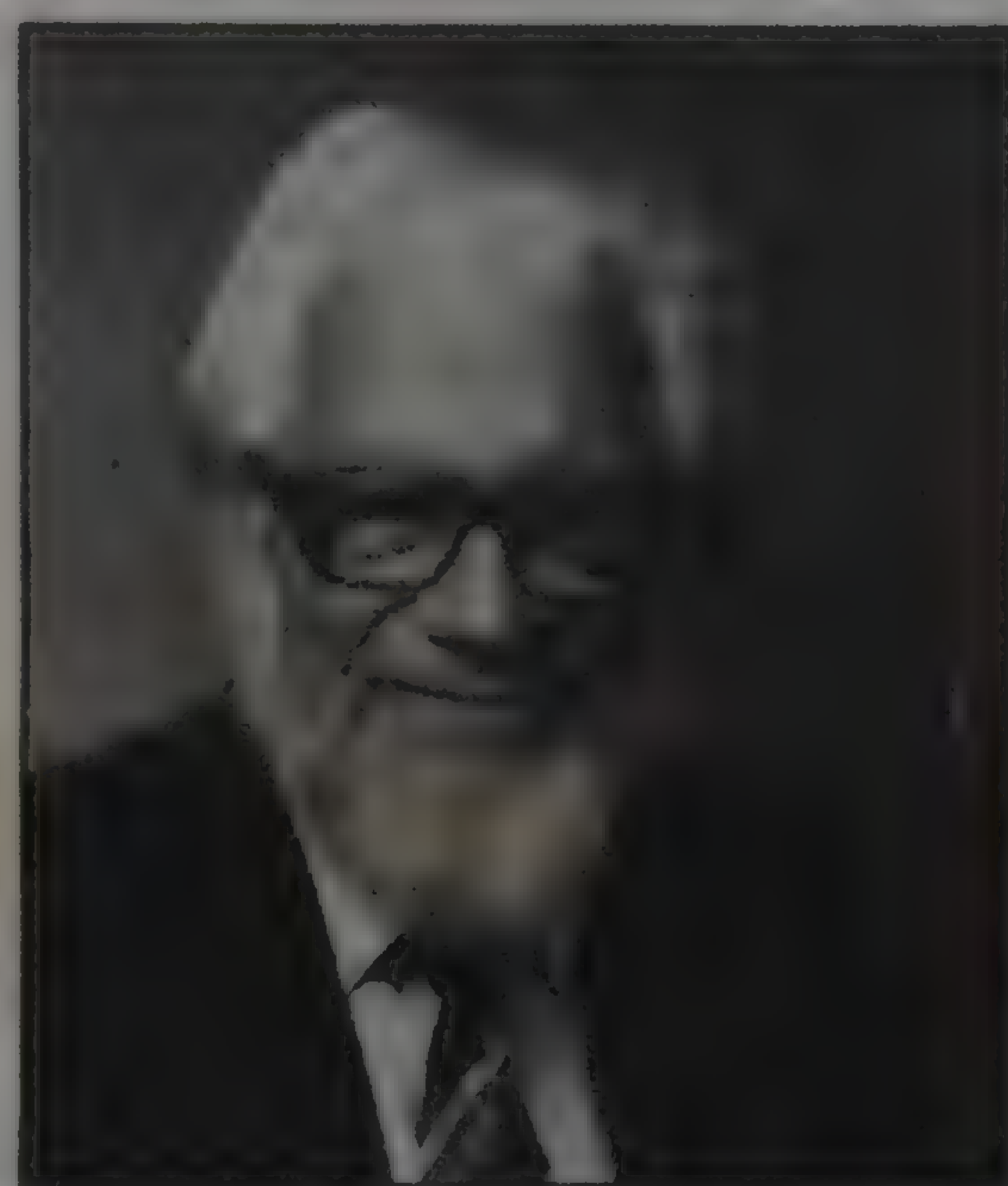
*Calvinist Contact: You are now 40 years old. That means you are now middle-aged. Your face shows some wrinkles and you walk a little slower than before. But I still love you, Calvinist Contact, and I find you more beautiful with each passing year.*

*I offer you my warmest congratulations on your 40th birthday, wishing you God's blessing for many more years to come or till the Lord returns.*

*Calvinist Contact, your life has never been very easy. You have been pushed around quite a bit. Competition threatened to cut your throat. But you came out of every corner.*

*Some did not appreciate this. They said in disappointment or disapproval, "You are middle-of-the road! Colourless!" But you responded, "I am and will remain ecumenically Reformed!"*

*You said further, "Some Calvinists may be more, or ever better, Calvinistic than others, but I will love them all. I will listen to them all. And they may even make mistakes on my pages. My informed readership will set them straight." And so it went,*



*and so it happens even today.*

*Calvinist Contact I love you, notwithstanding some inconsistencies. You have been and are a kingdom paper and not an additional church*

*paper. You have preserved in an admirable way our Kuyperian heritage. On every page you try to understand what it means that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philip. 2:11).*

*Calvinist Contact, I will love you and I will read you as long as you spell out that Jesus is KURIOS, LORD, KING over all areas of our life and over every square centimetre of our world.*

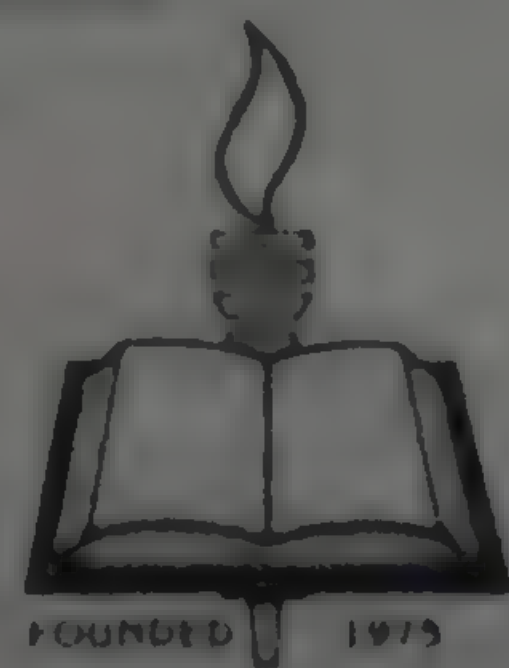
*Proficinas atque crescas, may you prosper and grow!*

**Dr. Rem Kooistra,  
Huron Campus Ministry,  
Waterloo, Ont.**

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On-campus resident students at RBC during the coming academic year will be charged a minimum of \$5600. US for tuition, room & board. Cost for books and certain fees are extra. Actual savings will depend on the prevailing exchange rate at the time of semester registration.

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Psalm 46.

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## Being plainly Reformed in a time of trouble

# The Farenhorst years: 1959-1976

Bert Witvoet

With Dick Farenhorst's editorship begins the longest and most significant phase for *Calvinist Contact*. The first issue under his editorial guidance is September 18, 1959. Ad. Otten has resigned and Farenhorst, Publishing Director of Bosch & Keuning (Canada), is given an interim appointment to be in charge "of all editorial matters until further notice." (Minutes of the Executive Committee, Sept. 8, 1959).

It is difficult to break up Farenhorst's editorship into distinct phases. One can see development in his approach, but exactly when he adjusts his course is difficult to determine. As time goes by, he seems to become more cautious, however. This can to a large degree be traced to what is happening in society as a whole, but it also has a lot to do with what happens in the (Christian) Reformed community in Canada.

### Historical backdrop

What is the background against which Farenhorst begins his editorship? By 1959, many churches and several

turbulence.

### Carefully Reformed

Farenhorst's editorship from the start is intertwined with developments within Christian organizations. He is a proponent of Christian Kingdom witness through various institutions and associations. Farenhorst thinks highly of Abraham Kuyper's "pro rege" (for the King) ideas. But throughout the years he learns to take some distance from what the various Christian organizations are doing and saying. This is partly due to the fact that an editor and journalist should always

almost Anabaptist, strain that seeks the way of peace and humility. The second strain seems to become stronger in later years.

Throughout his editorship he is surrounded mostly by Christian Reformed ministers. In the beginning this was a fairly large and mixed group, several of them wellknown for their support of Christian organizations. Names like Francois Guillaume, Henry Van Andel and Alvin H. Venema come to mind. Towards the end of his editorship he seems to make use almost exclusively of a four-minister editorial committee consisting of John Van Harmelen, Louis Praamsma, Jack Geuzebroek and Remkes Kooistra. Most of these men, except perhaps for Kooistra, take a moderate or centrist position on various issues. The phrase that they liked to apply to themselves is "Gewoon Gereformeerd" (plainly Reformed). In other words, stay with what you know and avoid the extremes



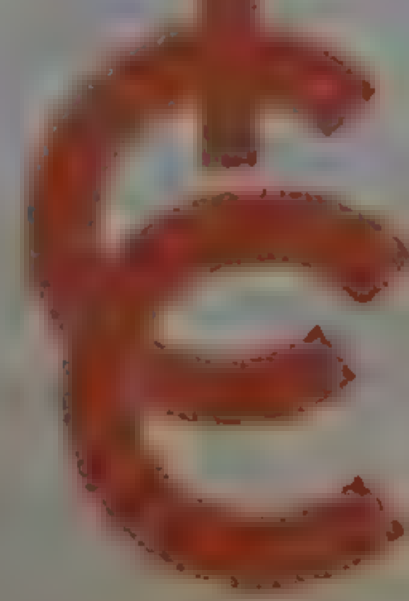
The Farenhorsts arrived in Chatham by bus from New York. The little boy in the centre is another immigrant child.

the way of active obedience. The one submits to injustice in the name of love; the other opposes it in the name of righteousness.

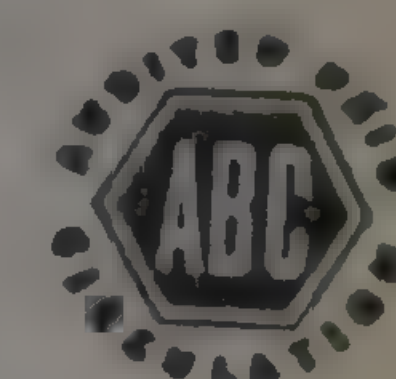
A similar trend is noticeable in the October 20, 1961, discussion on whether we should fight for our rights to government funding for Christian education. It is noteworthy that Dick Farenhorst argues for "active obedience."

# CALVINIST + CONTACT

DUTCH - CANADIAN



CHRISTIAN WEEKLY



"Whoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Mark 10:44

SEPT. 18th. 1959 - No. 414 - 12 PAGES • P.O. BOX 312, ST. B. HAMILTON, ONT.

14th YEAR of PUBLICATION  
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Christian schools have been established. Hamilton District Christian High offers grades nine through 12 with a tuition fee of \$1.50 to \$3.50 a week, depending on distance. The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) has been established. It has, in fact, experienced an unfortunate split in the Hamilton area which resulted in the formation of the Christian Trade Union of Canada (CTUC). The Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARSS), holds its first study conference in Unionville, Ontario.

John Kennedy is the President of the United States and Prime Minister Diefenbaker has a firm grip on things Canadian. Fidel Castro has just gained victory in Cuba, but it is not yet clear whether he is a Communist.

We are at the brink of the turbulent, counter-cultural sixties. It's a critical time for the world and for the Reformed community. Farenhorst's editorship would not be able to bypass this

maintain a great degree of objectivity and impartiality. But it is also because he fears what he considers the excesses of the neo-Kuyperians.

There are two strains running through Farenhorst's life: the Calvinian strain that seeks to capture every area of life for Christ, and the more passive,



Who's this in a 1961 Calvinist Contact?

### A valuable instrument

Congratulations on the 40th Anniversary of *Calvinist Contact*. I read about it in *Trouw* this morning.

While teaching at Calvin Theological Seminary, I read it regularly. I continue to read it a little belatedly at the Free University Library.

Through the years your publication has made a very significant contribution. While teaching at Calvin College, I found it a very valuable instrument by which to know about and understand the Canadian scene and its development since I served the

Brockville and Martintown (now Cornwall) CRCs during the summer of 1959. And now I see the whole scene from another perspective while teaching at the Free University.

With deep appreciation for the varied roles your magazine has played, I wish you the Lord's blessing in years to come and thank Him for its contributions to the advancement of His Kingdom in Canada and the world.

Bastiaan Van Elderen,  
Professor of New Testament,  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

of Pentecostalism, conservatism, activism or intellectualism, which seem to tear at the community.

### Two kinds of obedience

Let's have a look at some of the issues that take up space on the pages of *Calvinist Contact* during this period.

The issue of October 6, 1961, reports the establishment of the Committee for Justice and Liberty (CJL). The committee is initiated because of the need to defend two men in the Toronto area against the demands of compulsory unionism. These two men, Bonvanie and De Haan, are custodians working for the public school system. Their predicament is seen as a matter of principle that goes beyond the personal situation.

Rev. Dick Habermehl from Newmarket, Ontario, (October 20) finds that the CJL claims that freedom has been denied and that the laws of God have been trampled on are a bit exaggerated. Dec. 1 carries an open letter signed by six ministers (Geuzebroek, Habermehl, Hanenburg, Schaafsma, Van Harmelen and Verbrugge). The ministers write that the CJL should not argue so strongly for personal liberty but out of love for the common good accept some limitation to freedom.

Farenhorst agrees with CJL that the action stems from a Christian belief in the supremacy of Christ the King. The January 12 issue in the new year contains several letters against the position of the six ministers.

This discussion demonstrates that in the C.C. constituency there are two ways of understanding Christian obedience which will surface time and again: the way of passive obedience and

### Only for skinny people

Another issue that will haunt the pages of *Calvinist Contact* for some time is the matter of membership in the ARSS. The new constitution calls for two kinds of membership: associate membership and full membership. A full member has to be recommended by three people and be approved by the annual membership.

In an article headed by the priceless title: "Fat Man's Misery," Rev. Jack Geuzebroek takes dead aim at what he and others consider an exclusivistic method of running an association. The title comes from a narrow cave near Collingwood, which only allows the very thin to pass through.

It is again noteworthy that Farenhorst defends the ARSS position. He points out that the Free University in Amsterdam has a similar set-up. Besides, he says, not everyone understands university matters. In addition, many universities that started out being Christian have shipwrecked. So, it does not hurt to be extra careful. It appears that Farenhorst changes his mind on this later. In the July 19 issue of 1968, he rejoices that the Association for the Advancement of Christian Studies (AACS), the new name for the ARSS, has dropped the narrow membership requirements.

The May 10, 1963, issue reports that the Supreme Court has struck down the decision by the Ontario Labour Relations Board to deny certification to the CLAC. This is a significant victory for the CLAC and for those who insisted that a Christian labour union should not be forced to drop its

Continued on page 18...



# The Farenhorst years: 1959-1976

...continued from page 17.

reference to Scripture. Active obedience triumphed in this instant.

## How much is enough?

The year 1964 soon launches into a lively discussion on Christian education. Longtime C.C. columnist Saskia dares to agree with a reader that parents should not withhold food from their children in order to pay for Christian education (Feb. 7). She also worries about the quality of Christian education, what with a number of unqualified teachers in the private system. In a second article (Feb. 14), Saskia raises the matter of Christian schools tied to church confessions,

making their basis too narrow. She also mentions that Christian school support is wrongly used as a criterion for nomination to church office.

Furthermore, she does not think that a woman should have to leave the home to pay for Christian education. Does she realize the storm that will erupt over her?

In the Feb. 28 issue Arie Doff leads off with a column entitled "Nou, nou!" (Now, now!) He suspects that his beloved columnist must have been sick, because this kind of writing is not characteristic of her. He disagrees that there are easy answers to what we should or should not do in support of Christian education. There are too many

## From Dutch to English during the Farenhorst years

Dick Farenhorst observes in a February, 1960, editorial that after having settled in Canada for approximately 10 years, the Reformed community can be grateful about its accomplishments — visible in churches, schools and Christian organizations. But, he asks, to whom is all this activity directed? He notes that all these institutions and organizations have not succeeded in penetrating the Canadian fabric of society.

Farenhorst's orientation to the Canadian social environment results in his working for a greater use of English in C.C. and his desire to address young people.

Since Calvinist-Contact in 1960 still uses predominantly Dutch, the Publishing Association decides, starting November 1960, to issue a monthly magazine called *Youthful Outlook*. The monthly will be written entirely in English and will cost \$3.00 a year (subscribers to Calvinist Contact pay only \$1.00 a year).

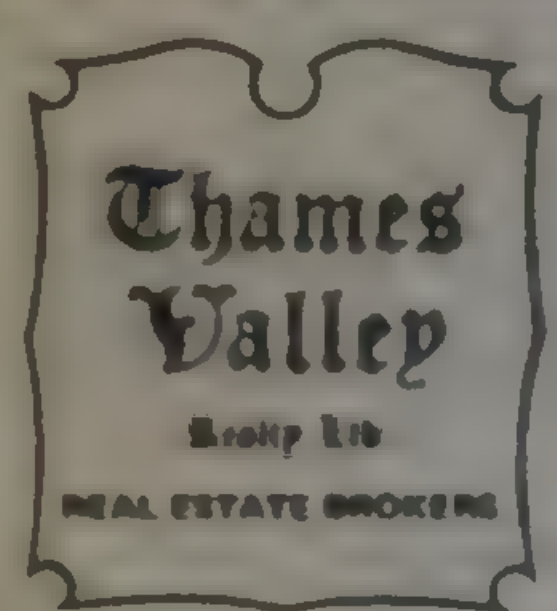
This arrangement lasts only two years, however, at which time a peach-coloured insert into Calvinist Contact called *Christian Courier* takes its place. From then on, it's two or four pages of English inserted into some eight pages of Dutch.

In May 12, 1967, (five years later) this insert is dropped, and the English section is now called the "English Edition" of Calvinist Contact. It consists of eight pages of English and eight pages of Dutch. But this is just an interim solution, because a few months later (Sept. 22) there is no more "English Edition." Instead, English pages are interspersed between the Dutch. The front page of C.C. is still Dutch. Not until April 17 of 1969 is that page written in English — with a lead article by Dr. Remkes Kooistra entitled: "Waiting for God — Does it Help?"

By the fall of 1973, the Dutch is limited to four pages in the centre of the paper. Of course, there is always that ad that says, "Garlic is goed voor U."

Thus, throughout Farenhorst's editorship there is a constant awareness that the immigrant community as quickly as possible adopt the English language, so that it may hold onto its youth and make a unique, Calvinistic contribution to Canada.

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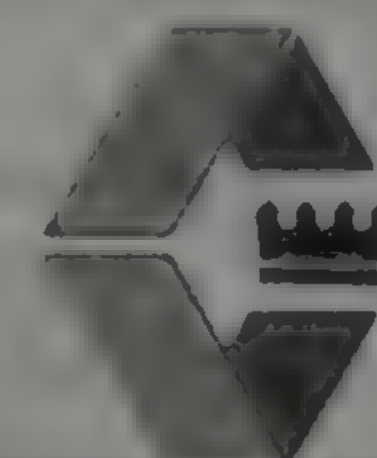
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# The Farenhorst years: 1959-1976

...continued from page 19.  
Ridderbos.

In the October 13 issue Farenhorst regrets that the doors of the newly opened ARSS Institute seem to be closed to those who have difficulties with the "WdW" philosophy. November and December bring in more letters, many of them in support of the Editor. Farenhorst says that he supports the work of the ARSS, but he questions the way this organization calls people under its banner. Since a lot of acrimony is evident in letters to the editor, he wants an end to the debate.

## The great shake-up

The years that now follow unfold various significant events that will shake the Christian Reformed community.

June 21, 1968, reports on the visit to North America by Prof. H.M.

Kuitert. This liberal theologian is going to keep the pens of writers and readers moving for a while.

In June, 1970, the Christian Reformed Synod examines a serious division that exists in the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto. Farenhorst finds it difficult to believe that people of one congregation can drift so far apart. Some readers accuse the AACCS of having fanned the flames of controversy in that church.

Following hard upon the heels of this trouble is the publication of the book *Out of Concern for the Church*. The January 7/14, 1971, issue carries a back-page ad that shows three wedges being driven into church, home and school. The anonymous ad blames the book *Out of Concern* for bringing division into those three areas of life. Articles and letters follow. Things are getting out of hand.



Cornelius Lambregtse was interviewed in the February 19, 1973 issue. His book *In Zijn Arm de Lammeren*, which was serialized in *De Wachter* and *Calvinist-Contact* became a best-seller.



## Mandatory window

*Calvinist Contact* provides a fascinating, lively, and — for CRC folk — I believe, mandatory window into the world of *The Christian Reformed Church's* life and witness in Canada today. It is a most worthy partner in the shared task of bearing witness to Reformed Christianity in our society.

**James Ross Dickey,**  
Editor, *Presbyterian Record*,  
Toronto, Ont.

It is at this time that Dick Farenhorst shows himself to be the peacemaker that he is. He plans a unity conference in St. Catharines, Ontario. Forty-four invited leaders (mostly ministers) show up and eventually draw up a statement of consensus. Farenhorst, in his May 6 editorial, expresses deep appreciation for the spirit of unity that emerged after some frank exchange of opinions and feelings.

## The final years

The years 1972 and following show a definite lull in discussions around Christian organizations. Farenhorst visits Australia, South Africa and The Netherlands. There are discussions about government support, women in office and the second worship service. (This is the second round; the first one occurred in 1969 when Rev. Henry Numan Sr. led off with "That Sickening, Sagging, Second Sunday

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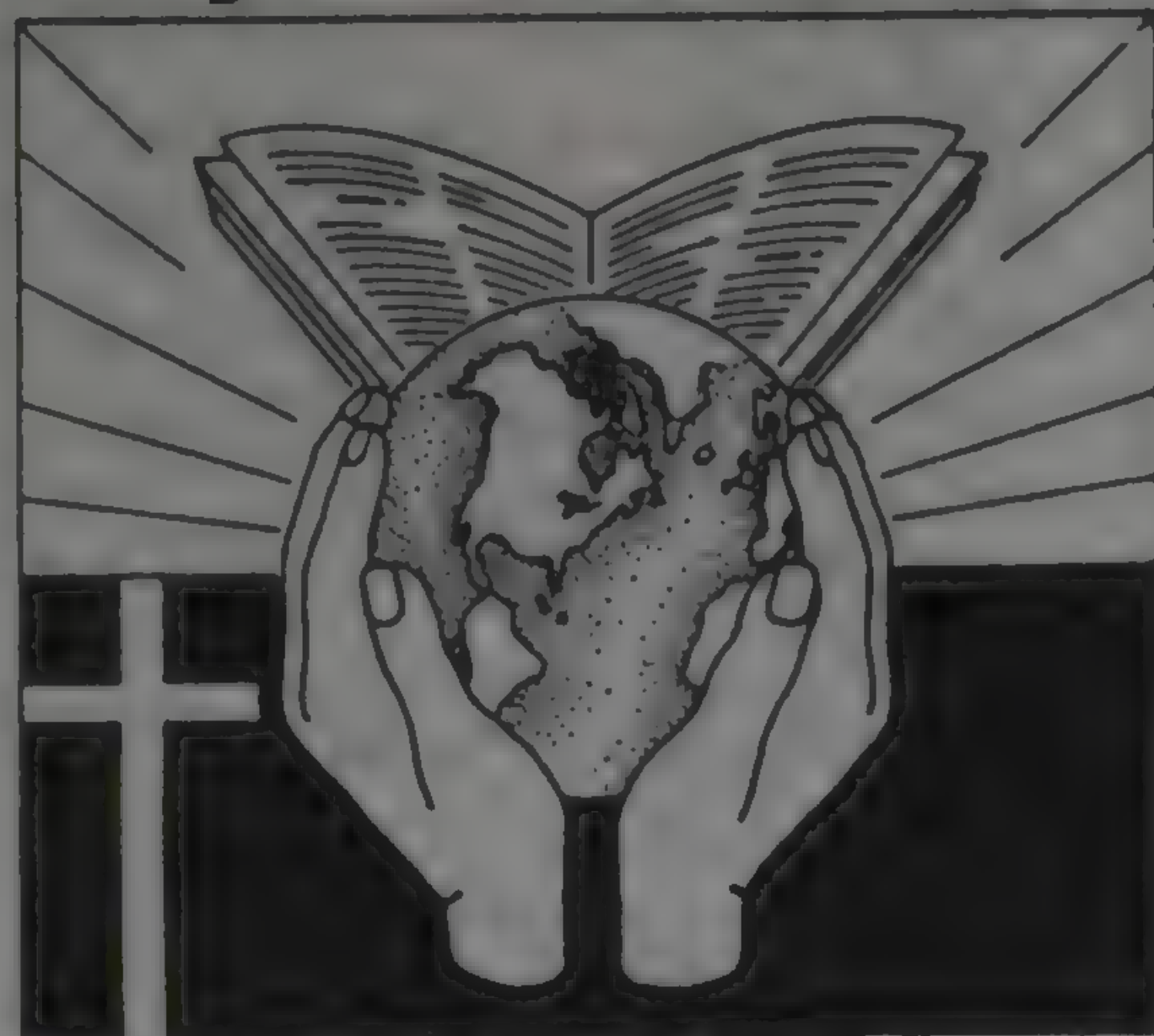
*You and us are on the same  
wave-length: to uncover ways in which  
we can be truer to God's work  
and affirm His purposes.*



# The Farenhorst years: 1959-1976

Service.") and women in office.

1975 is the last year of Farenhorst's active editorship. In September, Jack Geuzebroek writes an editorial because Farenhorst is in the hospital. Pneumonia is diagnosed. But eventually it turns out to be cancer. The last issue of the year carries a D.F. editorial, in which Farenhorst expresses gratitude for the many, many cards and best wishes. He did not realize that the ties between readers and himself were so strong. Three more Farenhorst editorials follow in 1976. But most of the time it's men like Louis Praamsma, Louis Tamminga and John VanHarmelen



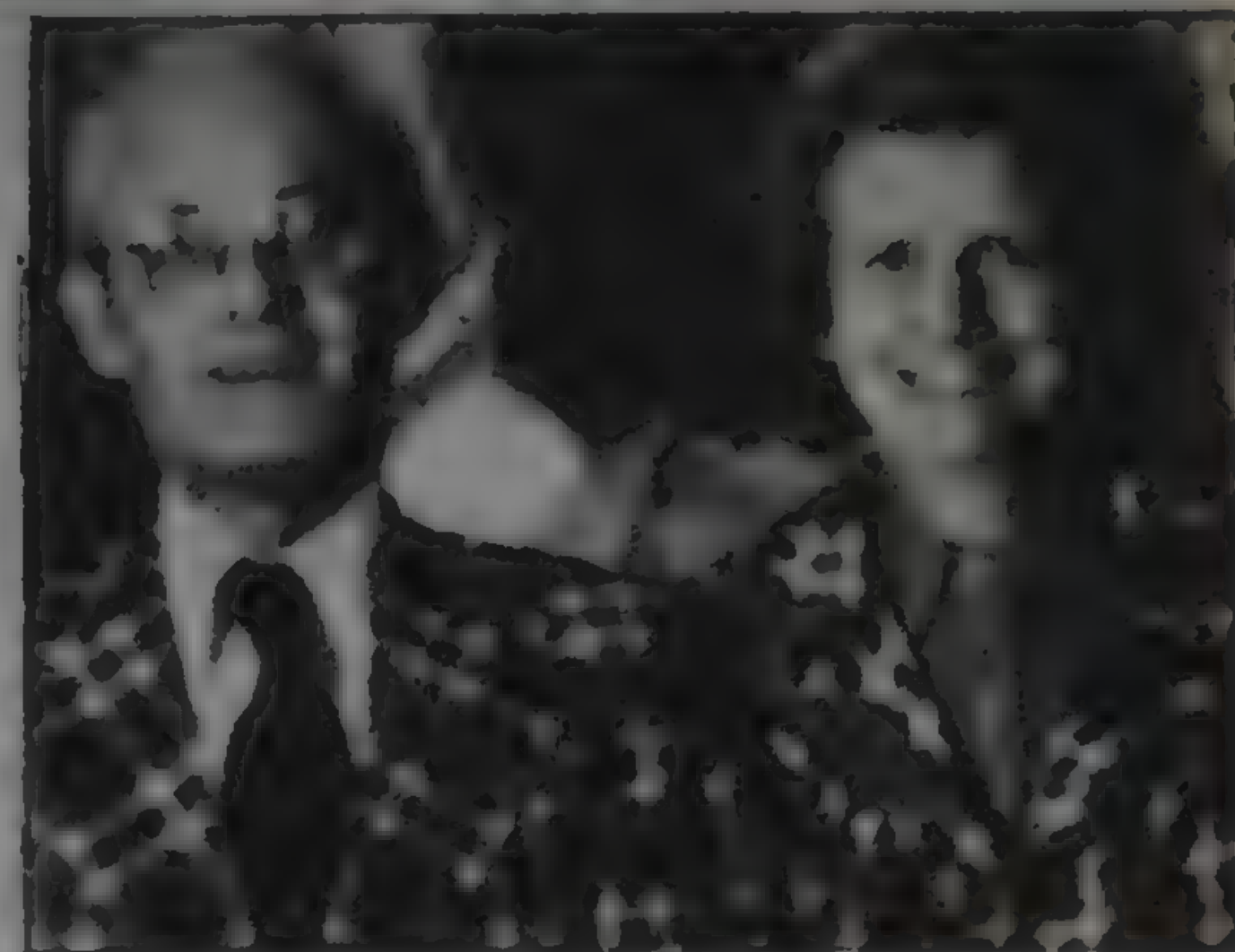
This logo was at the head of Farenhorst editorials that take over that task.

On July 6, Dick Farenhorst passes away.

Dr. Louis Praamsma, a close family

friend and long-time member of the editorial council of C.C., speaks at the funeral, "We, the readers of his many editorials in *Calvinist Contact* mourn the loss of a good Christian leader, a trusted counsellor, a wise man with a God-fearing heart," he says. Dick Farenhorst understood the secret of the communion of the saints, according to Praamsma. That secret is that Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore they belong to each other.

Those were true words. Dick Farenhorst belonged to the readers of *Calvinist Contact*. And I, editor number seven, hereby salute him.



## From Mrs. Farenhorst:

*Warm congratulations on the occasion of the 40th birthday of Calvinist Contact. May the Lord bless you in your most important work. With His help and your endeavour let C.C. be read by all our families to that they may be enriched and be encouraged to put Christian principles into practice.*

**Catherine Farenhorst-Deenik,**  
(wife of former C.C. editor  
Dick Farenhorst)



Letters to the editor went through this mailbox in the Farenhorst years.

## Continuity and contact

*Over the years, from Halifax to Houston, from Grand Prairie to Grand Rapids, Calvinist Contact has lived up to its name — keeping contact among far-flung Calvinist communities.*

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*It is a commentary on God's blessings, and on our faithful and unfaithful stewardship of His good gifts. Those past decades are hardly thinkable apart from its regular publication.*

*Amid our many discontinuities, Calvinist Contact provided a large measure of continuity. South of the border too, many of us eagerly turn to it for ongoing contact.*

**Dr. Gordon Spykman,**  
Calvin College,  
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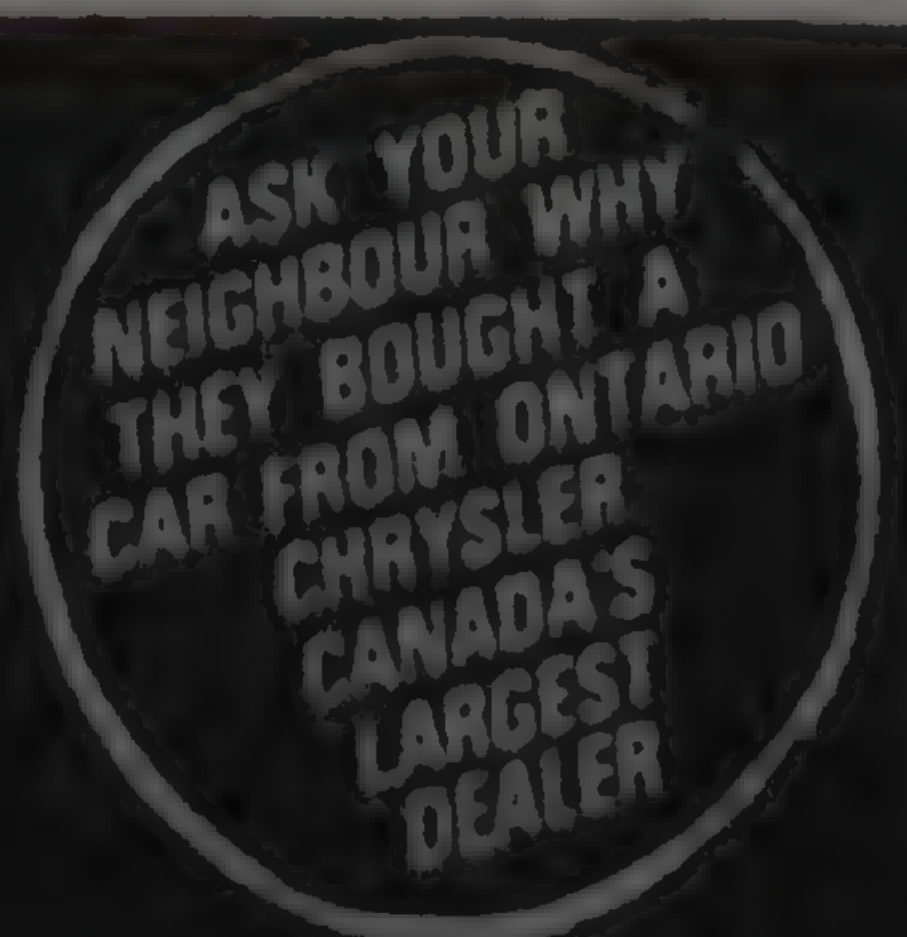
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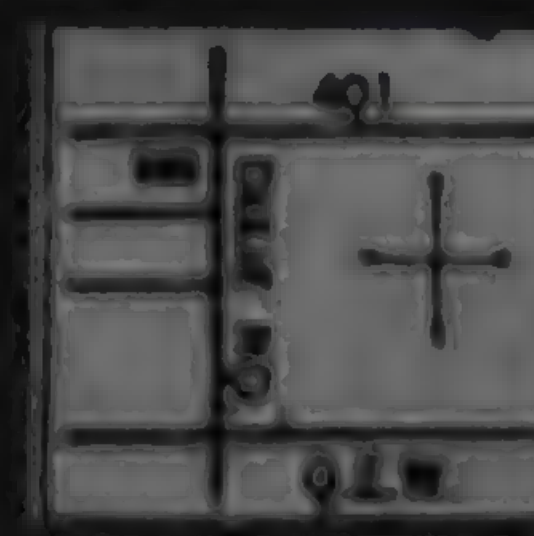
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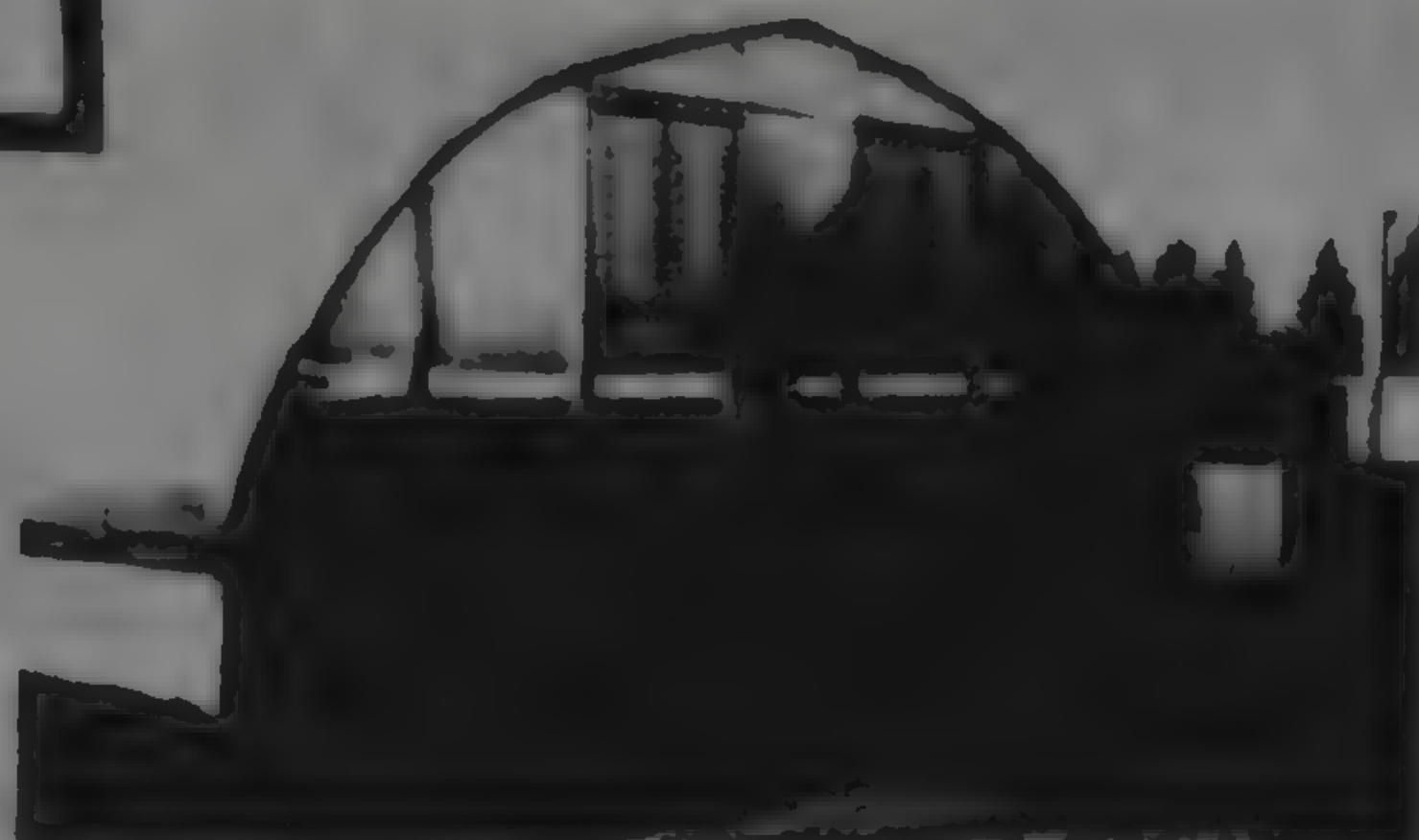
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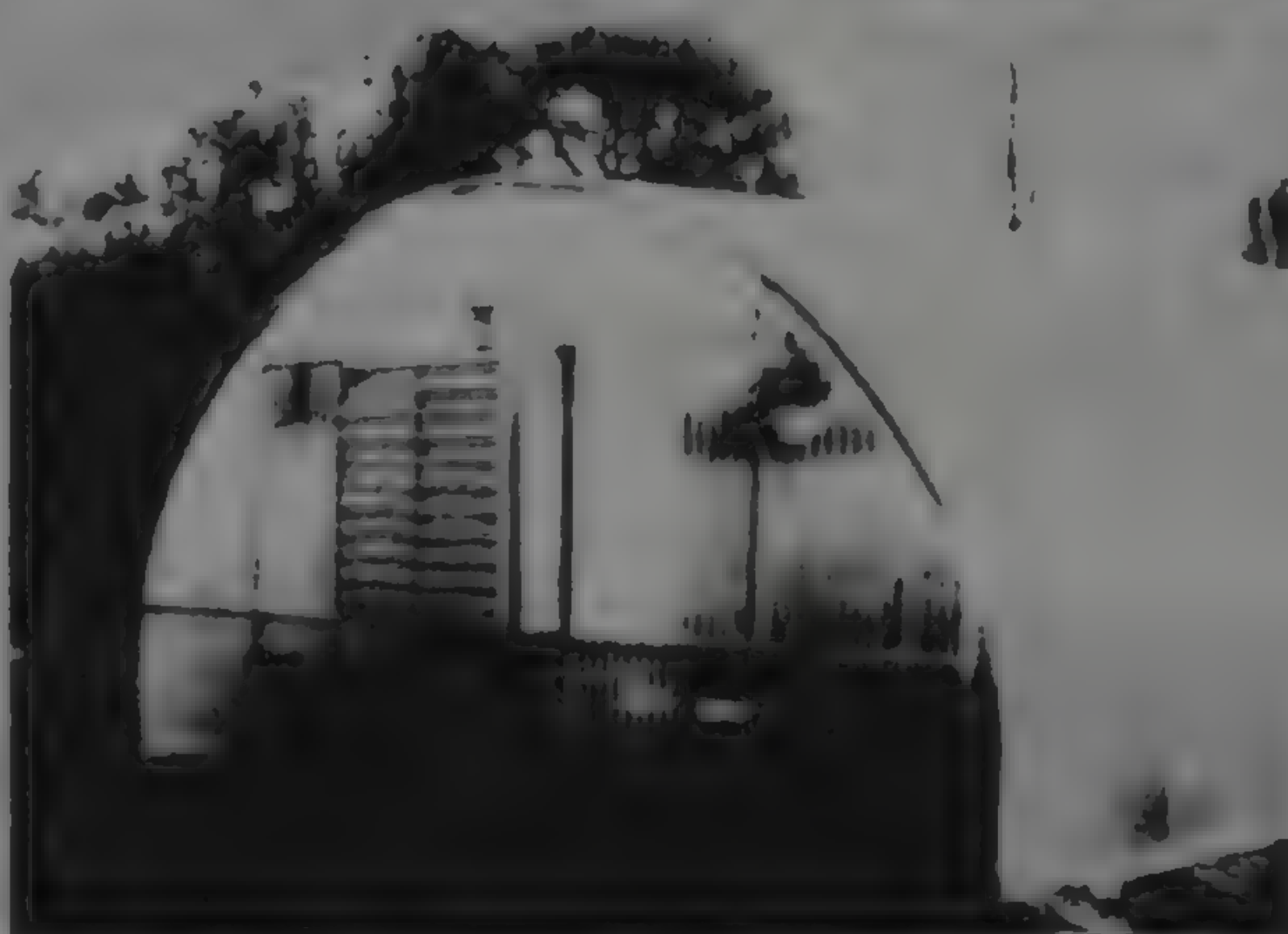
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# The Knight years: 1976-1982

## More newsy ... but still CRC

Marian Van Til

1976 was to be a year of transition. As the year dawned, Dick Farenhorst was still *Calvinist Contact's* editor (and general manager) and had been since 1959.

But Farenhorst was suffering from terminal cancer. Though editor in name, his duties were largely being performed by (then 26-year-old) Keith Knight, and by editorial assistant Harry De Vries. (De Vries had joined C.C. three years earlier and remained a valuable co-worker until he left in 1983).

In early spring (March 8) readers were told that Knight would become general manager of *Calvinist Contact*. Mr. Farenhorst died on July 6, 1976. That death thrust the responsibility of editorship onto Keith Knight.

### A new emphasis

Knight had already moved production to St. Catharines from Hamilton on and around July 1. The C.C. issue which announced Farenhorst's death (July 16) was the first one published at the new location.

Under Knight's editorship the paper began to take on a somewhat more modern look and gradually moved toward discussion of topics (and current social issues) which are outside the scope of the institutional church. However, C.C.'s audience was still assumed to be (Dutch-Canadian) Christian Reformed. But it's safe to say Knight wanted a better informed and more outward-looking Christian Reformed readership.

Keith Knight's editorship brought a certain "newsiness" to *Calvinist Contact* — an emphasis on presenting news, both church-related and from the broader world, as a journalist sees it. At the same time there was less emphasis on editorials.

In addition to stories by Knight himself, the reporting was done by

C.C.'s front page in 1976 was not devoted exclusively to church and church-related news, but those concerns loomed large, as in the past.

The January 19, 1976, issue discussed Dutch theologian H.M. Kuitert's less than biblical views — disturbing to many — and his relation to the Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland (GKN), a sister church to the CRC. This topic was of keen interest to many C.C. readers, the majority of whom were Dutch immigrants and perhaps former members of the GKN. The GKN is still kindling fiery conversation and writings in some Christian Reformed circles. It is held up as an example of the path a church ought *not* to take.

C.C. routinely followed Christian Reformed church dedications, annual synods, ministers' installations, ordinations and farewells, Sunday School and Calvinette and Cadet conventions (the latter being the Christian Reformed equivalent to Girl and Boy Scouts), diaconal conferences, Christian school openings, and the milestones of social justice and educational organizations with largely CRC membership.

### Knight wants line to other journalists

Even before he was granted the title "editor," Keith Knight put out a call

## New general manager

Guardian Publishing Company announces the appointment of Keith Knight as general manager of CALVINIST-CONTACT.



Keith Knight

Mr. Knight has spent seven years in journalism, working as reporter and then as city editor of The WELLAND TRIBUNE, a daily newspaper. He brings with him knowledge in editing, layout and advertising.

As general manager, Mr. Knight will be responsible for the business operation of CALVINIST-CONTACT.

Mr. Dick Farenhorst, who has served faithfully as general manager and editor of the paper for a number of years, will maintain his position as editor. During Mr. Farenhorst's illness, many of those responsibilities will be assumed by Mr. Knight.

Mr. Knight was born in Delft, The Netherlands and was educated in Christian elementary and secondary schools in Ontario. He is a member of the Welland Junction Chr. Ref. Church where he served as youth

(Continued on page 2)

opening of Redeemer College (Hamilton, Ontario) in September, 1982 were chronicled.

The December 3, 1976, issue announced the first meeting of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC). (The council is a voluntary association of CRC classes. One of its major functions is to present Reformed views on social justice issues to the Canadian government).

That group's Committee for Contact with the Government, along with the previously mentioned Christian action and educational enterprises have helped create CRC visibility and impact in Canada quite beyond what one might

September 17, 1976, issue. He tells those readers they will have their way, but that the decision to include fewer Dutch-language articles "will be under constant review...."

This was to be a topic which would elicit periodic debate for six years! until it climaxed in 1983 during the first months of Bert Witvoet's editorship.

What was to be a much larger and longer controversy — both in the paper and in the CRC at large — got off to a brisk start in the January 14, 1977 issue. Dr. Remkes Kooistra asked the (front page) question, "Does scripture allow women in office?" He answered affirmatively, much to the chagrin of

# THE ADVENTURES OF THE JOLLY BAKER

by W.G. Vandehulst



newly-hired, far-flung news correspondents. This even meant opening an Edmonton office in October 1979, with its own editor and two stringers. For a while during this period, C.C. also had a correspondent in Nova Scotia and a full-time reporter in Toronto. Was the vision of C.C. to be a national weekly becoming a reality?

### CRC still centre stage

In 1976, as the "Knight era" commenced, C.C.'s Editorial Board consisted of four CRC ministers: Jack Geuzebroek, John Van Harmelen, Remkes Kooistra, and Louis Praamsma. These last three wrote for the paper quite regularly. Praamsma's column, "The World Around Us," had begun in the Farenhorst era. Van Harmelen wrote a feature called "Pulpit and Pew: A Page on Church Life."

(March 29, 1976) to "Christian writers and journalists." He asked that they contact him if they were interested in forming a "Canadian Association of Christian Writers" so that their "efforts" (at daily papers or as freelance writers) could be "coordinated." Response must have been minimal. C.C. did not mention the project in the following months.

### C.C. notes Redeemer and Canadian Council founding

Two new CRC-related groups were organized during Knight's first year as editor.

C.C.'s September 3, 1976, front page told readers about the work of a committee which was studying the feasibility of establishing a Christian college in Ontario. In many subsequent issues, the rapid growth of the Ontario Christian College Association and the

expect from a church with 84,000 (Canadian) members.

### CRC in USA notices Canadians

It seems that the American wing of the CRC was also at least beginning to take greater note of its much smaller, oft-ignored counterpart in Canada. After coverage of the CRC Synod of 1977, Knight reported that "a Canadian atmosphere and influencing presence was felt this year."

### Two controversies

During his first year as editor, Keith Knight inadvertently fathered what was to be a long-running controversy, albeit some would say of the "tempest in a teapot" variety: "There's too much Dutch in *Calvinist Contact*." Some readers were asking for "a bit less... please," according to Knight in the

some C.C. readers.

(That same front page ran a picture of "Canada's first woman priest," Mary Louise Lucas, at her investiture. Her church, for some reason, was not identified).

Debate on "women in office" continued on and off throughout that year. C.C. heard most frequently from incessant critic Rev. Jelle Tuininga of Lethbridge, Alberta.

### Eulogies

An event of significance to the broader Reformed community was reported on March 4. Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd died on February 12, 1977. Dr. Bernard Zylstra of Toronto's Institute for Christian Studies reflected on that death.

Continued on page 24...



# The Knight years: 1976-1982

...continued from page 23.

A more mundane topic, but one of great importance to *Calvinist Contact* was reported in the May 6/13, 1977 issue: C.C. updated its mailing procedure. It was now using "a modern Xerox addressing process." It was hoped that that process would be more efficient. If readers still received C.C. late, they could blame the Canadian post office.

The June 3, 1977, issue noted the death of Rev. Adam Persenaire, "one of the pioneer home missionaries who endeared himself to hundreds of Dutch immigrant families, in Southern Ontario." Persenaire came to St. Catharines, Ontario, in 1948, just before the biggest influx of post-war immigrants. He was "occasionally referred to," says the item's author John Knight, "as the 'bishop of Niagara.'"

## Dance appears, Praamsma disappears

In a very different vein four issues later, C.C. made an announcement of great consequence to many Christian Reformed college students: "Calvin



General Manager Harry De Vries looks at the layout of an upcoming issue with Anna Devries.

College Board to allow social dancing in a Christian manner." (!)

In October, after many years of service to *Calvinist Contact*, Dr. Louis Praamsma's column disappeared. October 14 was the last time his name appeared on the masthead as a member of C.C.'s editorial council. Oddly, no mention was made of his retirement as columnist or editorial council member.

## C.C. gets a new owner

At the end of 1977, Guardian Publishing Company Limited, owner of *Calvinist Contact*, announced it would sell its assets to K. Knight Publishing Limited, effective December 1, 1977. Guardian had been formed 20 years earlier for the purpose of "keeping *Calvinist Contact* alive in Canada" (C.C. December 9, 1977). Keith Knight, owner of the newly-formed Knight Publishing, assured readers that C.C.'s editorial council would "continue to act as a watchdog to ensure good, reformed material in the paper."

CRC-related enterprises remained alive and well as 1978 dawned. The C.C. of February 1978 announced that within a year, The King's College would open in Edmonton. (A half a year later, C.C. began a year-long series of monthly articles highlighting The King's). The Back to God Hour's broadcasts were now being heard (in Russian) in the Soviet world.

The May 5 issue asked the (let's hope) rhetorical question, "Can a Calvinist be a happy Christian?"

## CRC Synod given prominent coverage

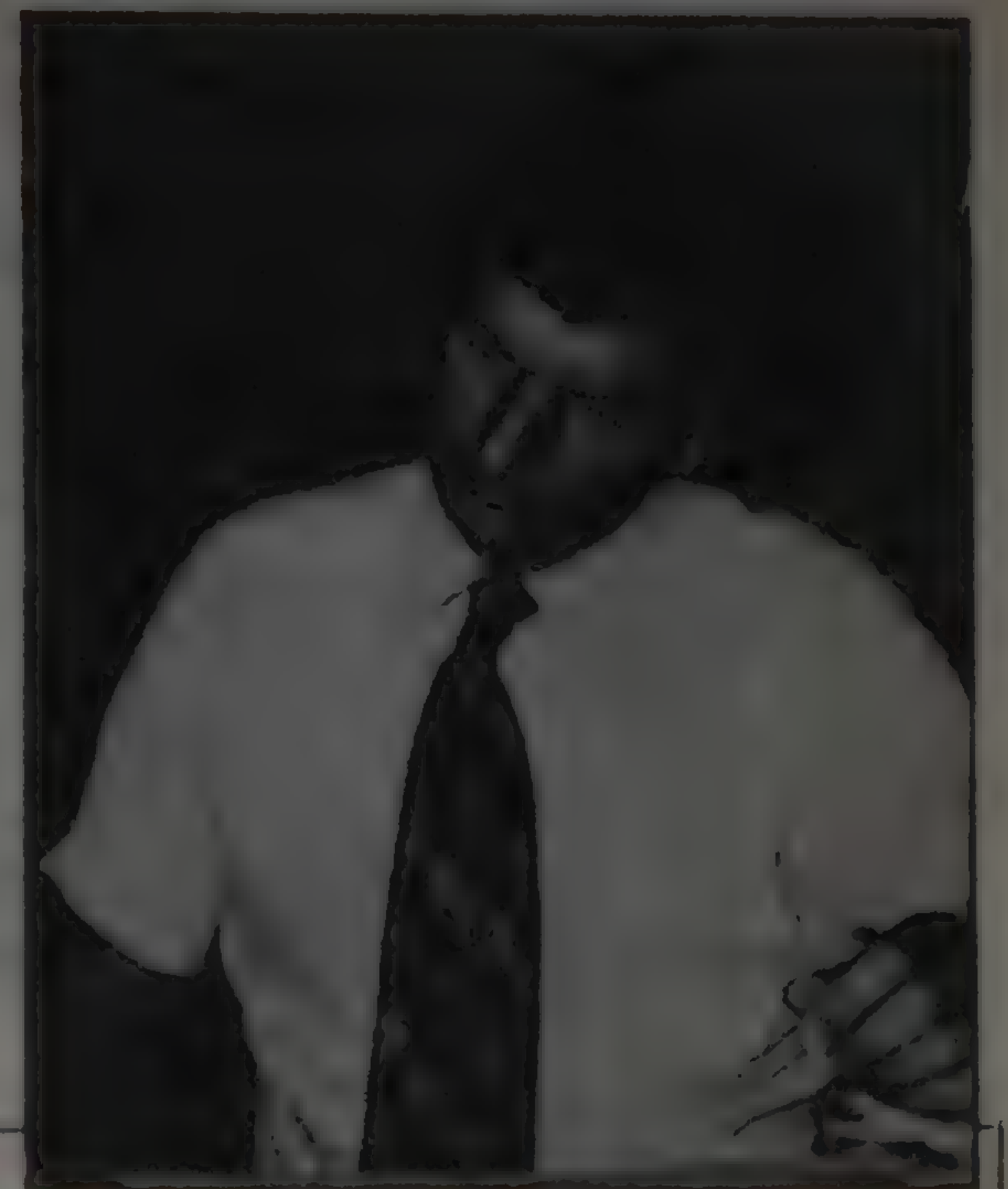
July 14, 1978, contained six pages of Christian Reformed Church Synod coverage. Its front page carried an either joyful or menacing message, depending on one's viewpoint: "Women may be ordained as deacons."

Two synodical officers in 1977 were Canadians: Vice President Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven, then of Clarkson, Mississauga, Ontario, and

Second Clerk Rev. Alvin Venema, then of First, Brantford, Ontario. But CRC Canadians in high places were no longer a cause for surprised comment as they had been only a year earlier.

On August 25, 1977, C.C. let readers peer into its offices to watch its weekly production process. A one-page spread on "the home of *Calvinist Contact*" also pictured its (now seven) employees at work.

The January 5, 1979, issue continued a three-month debate by readers about whether organists should be paid!



## The man Keith Knight

Keith Knight, *Calvinist Contact*'s youngest editor, was born in 1949 in Delft, The Netherlands. A year later, his parents and their six children settled on a farm in Fenwick, Ontario.

Knight's schooling took place at nearby Wellandport Christian School and Hamilton District Christian High. He then contemplated attending university. Instead, a year later he began what was to be his life's work: a career in journalism.

Knight married Marian Los in 1971. They have four daughters, aged eight months to 12 years.

Knight's first reporting job was for the Dunnville Bureau of the *Welland Tribune*. He soon moved to the paper's main office in Welland and eventually became its city editor, a position he held until 1976.

In that year, Keith arranged to buy *Calvinist Contact* from its owners in Holland Marsh, Ontario. About the time of the death of Editor Dick Farenhorst in July 1976, new editor and publisher Knight moved the paper to St. Catharines from Hamilton. In the fall of 1980, ownership was shared with local investors.

Knight maintained the dual role of editor and publisher until serving a year of co-editorship with Bert Witvoet in 1982-83. Knight's eight-year association with *Calvinist Contact* then came to an end. For several years after that, he worked as a free-lance writer.

In the summer of 1985, Knight accepted the editorship of the *Lindsay (Ontario) Daily Post* (circulation 7,000). On September 1 he eagerly began his task there, overseeing the work of five reporters and writing daily editorials.

MVT

February 9 carried an item of slightly greater importance: The Netherlands was celebrating 400 years as an independent state, with festivities running from January to June, 1979. That news was sure to warm the hearts of C.C.'s still almost totally Dutch readership.

The spring issues of 1978 contained

protracted debate on "women in office." In fact, the debate lasted into June when Keith Knight editorialized about (the by then well-known) Marchiene Rienstra being ordained in the United Presbyterian Church. Ms. Rienstra attended Calvin Seminary and left the CRC because it would not allow

Continued on page 26...

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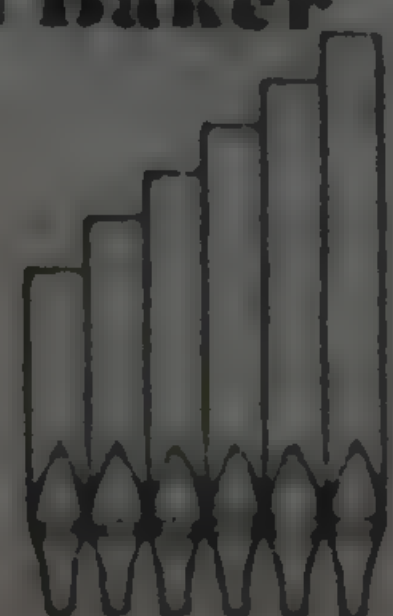
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# The Knight years: 1976-1982

...continued from page 24.

her ordination. She is now the pastor of a Reformed Church (RCA) in Holland, Michigan.

Again in 1979 (July 13), CRC Synod news took up C.C.'s front page and five subsequent pages. The most noteworthy items: "Women as deacons must wait," "Reformed church allows women ministers," and "Kuyvenhoven becomes *Banner* editor."

## Kuyvenhoven upstages C.C.

The Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven became the only Canadian in CRC history to attain editorship of the denomination's weekly publication, *The Banner*. Kuyvenhoven's appointment greatly increased *The Banner*'s subscriptions in Canada (and elsewhere). The paper had previously been largely ignored by Canadians because it ignored them — with their cultural situation and unique Reformed perspective. No one admitted it publicly then, but Kuyvenhoven's editorship initially had a dramatic negative impact on *Calvinist Contact*. A number of C.C. readers decided they must get one or the other, and the "new kid on the block" was given a try.

## C.C. reflects social issues

The July 20, 1979, issue reflected an important societal change: the increasing numbers of single adults. Salem Christian Mental Health Association sponsored its first weekend of "fellowship" for singles, including widowed and divorced persons. A few months later (Nov. 16), a front page article appeared entitled "A person has a right to remain single." With no intended sense of irony, the second front page story said, "Graham [evangelist Billy Graham] cites reasons for decline of home life."

The same issue also contained a feature on "Homosexuality and the Christian." (Its author was Christina Pleizier, chairperson of the Committee on Current Canadian Affairs of the



Murchiene Rienstra, left, and Martheen Griffioen graduated from Calvin Seminary.

Canadian Federation of Christian Reformed Women). The article was compassionate and open, though not condoning. Even so, some readers took issue with it.

Another developing concern was the plight of refugees. The end of the Vietnam era brought thousands of refugees to North America. From 1979 on, Asian refugees were important to C.C. readers. Many Christian Reformed Churches sponsored Asian families and helped them settle in a new world. Perhaps CRC members' own experiences as immigrants made them especially sympathetic.

In several issues during that period, it was noted that the Free Reformed

Church was warning its members against "worldliness."

## C.C. prepares for the '80s

In the fall of 1979, C.C. began to "prepare for the 1980s." Part of that, said Keith Knight, involved opening an office in Edmonton.

"Why Edmonton? Why Alberta? Because Edmonton has a high concentration of Reformed Christians. Because it has a large Christian school system which at present also includes post-secondary education at The King's College," said C.C.

Why a second office at all? Editor Knight saw it as an attempt "to meet the needs of the broader Reformed

constituency as it moves into the 1980s." He saw C.C.'s first 34 years as "growing years." The paper "met the need of the ethnic (Dutch) community back in 1945 when it got its start," but had to expand its outlook.

C.C. took on several of The King's students who were pursuing journalism careers, and a year later hoped to offer a journalism scholarship "to a college student in Canada." Subsequently, C.C., in cooperation with The King's, did sponsor a journalism workshop. A CBC reporter (among others) was a workshop leader. Knight's scholarship dream never materialized.

At the end of 1979, the C.C. masthead contained this list of "contributors": Ralph Heynen, Anne Hutten, Lynn Miller, Johan Tangelder, Carl Tuyl, John Van Harmelen, Ben Vandezande.

Wilma Binnema-Vander Schaaf was Edmonton editor. Edmonton reporters were Len de Ruiter and Larry Lutgendorff.

The editorial council consisted of (Rev.) Jack Geuzebroek, president; (Rev.) John Van Harmelen, secretary; (Rev.) Remkes Kooistra, (Mrs.) Ineke Parlevliet, and (Rev.) John Drost.

## C.C. reviews rock music

The January 11, 1980, issue contained C.C.'s first attempt to analyse secular rock music. Bill Van Dyk was the reviewer. The topic seemed to open the proverbial can of worms for some readers. One said (Feb. 1) rock is like a "drug." (The same issue of C.C. declared elsewhere that "the state of music in the church is deteriorating.") A month later another reader insisted "rock music cannot honour God." But a second countered by saying that Christian rock music was a "strong ministry" to him.

## CRC still front, centre

Though C.C. was still very church-oriented at that point, social issues which bear on Christians as well as non-

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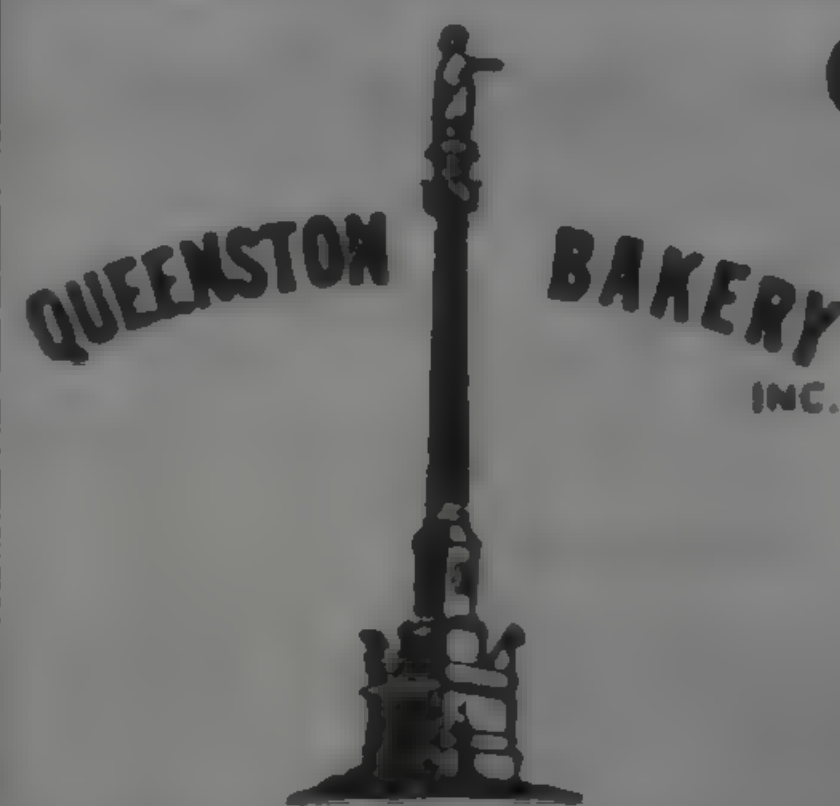
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# The Knight years: 1976-1982

Christians were increasingly discussed: mental and physical handicaps, mental illness, genetic engineering, abortion, the government's role regarding Christian education, homosexuality, Christians in politics, ethics in Christian business, multiculturalism, human rights.

The June 6 C.C. broke news which effected all Christian Reformed readers. The CRC in North America would open a Canadian headquarters in Burlington, Ontario. That expansion took place perhaps primarily because the Canadian government began to insist that charitable organizations be registered in Canada. But it also demonstrated the increasing influence the CRCs in Canada had on the church as a whole.

In June 1980, C.C. continued its practice of awarding heavy coverage — including the front page — to the CRC Synod. The synod-related topic that alarmed many C.C. readers (and the synod itself) in 1980 was the GKN's liberal attitude toward (and official statement on) homosexuality.

## C.C. takeover attempt thwarted

The September 19, 1980, issue took note of C.C.'s 35th Anniversary with a special four-page section.

Ten days later, under unusual circumstances, C.C. was no longer owned solely by Keith Knight.

George VerKaik of Holland Marsh, one of C.C.'s former owners, held the paper's mortgage. When he died, his daughter inherited that mortgage. Having aspirations as a writer, she was enthralled by the thought of owning her own paper. (She intended to move the paper to Michigan.) She called the mortgage — Keith Knight had seven days to come up with \$100,000.

Knight immediately contacted his lawyer who, in turn, rounded up a handful of local business people willing to secure the loan necessary to pay Ms. VerKaik. Dumbfounded and disappointed at that turn of events, she returned to Michigan without "her" paper. Thus eight Niagara region businessmen (mostly growers) joined Knight in becoming shareholders.

## C.C. looks for new editor

The February 6, 1981, issue contained an announcement of great importance to C.C.'s future and to its readers: "Calvinist Contact looks for a full-time editor." Just prior to Christmas, a questionnaire sent to readers convinced C.C.'s board of directors that "more than ever" the paper had to provide good reading material and, "more importantly, provide leadership in the many areas of life." It was felt that this could be done with an editor who did not have to fulfil the dual role of editor and publisher. The search continued all that year.

By December, a system of rotating editorialists was devised. Typically, a "guest editor" wrote editorials for a month at a time but was not in any other way involved with the production of the paper. (The list of illustrious "guests" included the Reverends Louis Tamminga, Louis Praamsma, Henry Van Andel, Henry Jonker, Dirk Hart, and Johan Tangelder; Dr. Bernard Zylstra, Anne Hutten, Harry Antonides, Ed Vander Kloet and Elbert Van Donkersgoed.) Toward the end of the year, Bert Witvoet was appointed co-editor; Keith Knight and he began to share editorial duties. The period of co-editorship enabled Witvoet (and C.C.) to determine whether he should move from Toronto to take on the full-time job of editor of Calvinist Contact.

## Make it a family paper

*Almost from the day I set foot on Canadian soil (now 29 years ago) I have been involved with C.C., first as a reader, then as a contributor and later as a member of the editorial committee. Come to think of it, I am the only member of the original board still serving today.*

*I had and still have my dreams for C.C. I would like to see C.C. distributed throughout Canada as a truly Christian "family" paper, geared to adults as well as to younger folks.*

*The late editor, Mr. Dick Farenhorst, and the editorial board of that time, shared my views to cater to the younger people. We started a monthly magazine, Youthful Outlook, which during the early sixties, co-existed with C.C. It died a slow financial death. Yet my dream is still alive. Doesn't Proverbs say that people without a vision perish?*

*So my endeavour is to do my part to make C.C. more of a family magazine than it is today. I would like to see more articles in it dealing with interpersonal relationships — in and outside of the family setting — and with spiritual and mental growth for different age levels.*

*The obstacles in life are many. C.C. could be of great benefit to its readers by tackling these in a practical, Christian way and so give guidance to young and old.*



**Ineke Parlevliet,  
Member of the Editorial  
Advisory Committee,  
Niagara Falls, Ont.**

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## Church should take strong role in formulating the Constitution



*This November 21, 1980, front page picture illustrated Rev. John DeVries' article on the constitution and the church — another indication of C.C.'s broadening perspective.*

## Christian higher education gets shots in arm

The last year-and-a-half of Knight's sole editorship had been quiet. This was an important time, however, for several Christian educational institutions.

The April 10, 1981, issue noted that The King's College (Edmonton) would begin its third year at a new, larger campus. That same issue announced that (Rev.) Henry De Bolster was named president of Redeemer College (Hamilton). Not long after, it was announced that the college would open in September the following year. On April 24 readers were told that "a group of Christian Reformed Church members near Orange City, Iowa" had bought property with the intention of "turning it into a Reformed seminary." The resulting institution became known, both affectionately and not so affectionately, as MARS — Mid-America Reformed Seminary.

A year later (April 16, 1982) Dr. John Hulst's appointment as president of Dordt College (Sioux Center, Iowa) was announced.

Beginning in September 1981, C.C. carried a series of five articles by Bert Witvoet commemorating the 25th anniversary of the AACS. (Historical research was done by Casper Vanderiet.)

## A facelift, a new reporter, an award

As the cold of December set in, C.C.

took on a new look: Its name appeared in larger, bolder print and it was more systematically organized into "pages" — news, people, entertainment, church, letters, Dutch, books, education, and contributions from the Edmonton office.

In May 1982, C.C. took note of the CLAC's 30th anniversary.

That same issue (May 7) announced something of importance to C.C.'s operations. It had hired Margaret Griffioen as a Toronto correspondent. Griffioen later was moved to St. Catharines headquarters and currently is in charge of lay-out and design.

Also in May of '82, C.C. proudly announced Keith Knight's winning of an award of excellence from the Canadian Church Press for an editorial entitled "Our own form of apartheid."

Keith Knight completed his term as editor of Calvinist Contact at the end of August 1983. He continued to be the paper's publisher until March 31, 1984, when Stan DeJong assumed that role.

In reflecting on his eight-year association with Calvinist Contact, Knight described it as "a time of spiritual renewal" for himself. Said he, "I came to discover the Christian Reformed Church as intimately as any layperson could .... I think that I developed a passion for Christ's worldwide church and a deep sense of pain at how denominations have been divided over internal squabbles."

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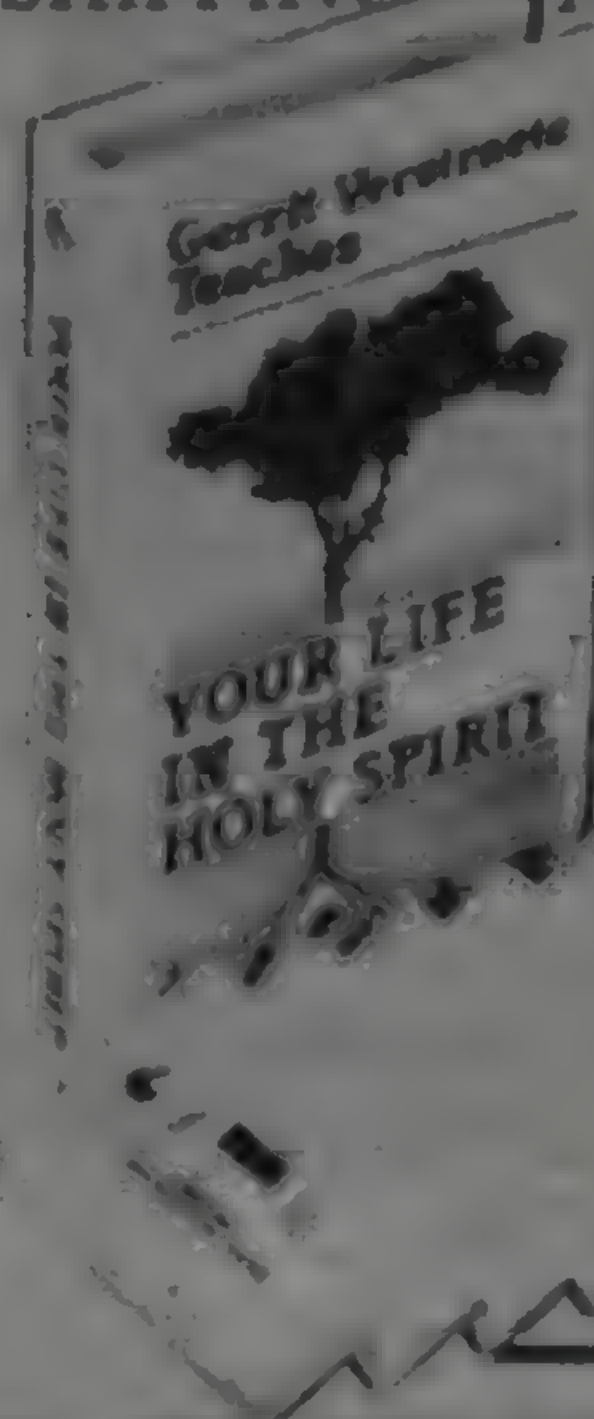


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# Calvinist Contact: 1982 to the present

## Into the non-Dutch mainstream

Marian Van Til

When Bert Witvoet took on the co-editorship of *Calvinist Contact* in September 1982, his influence was quickly apparent. His headlines were bold, catchy, and periodically evidenced his off-beat sense of humour and love of puns.

A year later, after Witvoet had become editor-in-chief, humour was given a permanent place in C.C. for the first time through the use of the weekly cartoons "Pontius' Puddle" and "Kuyper's Kapers." Reader reaction was mixed. (Some readers reacted especially negatively to "Pontius' Puddle," apparently missing the point of its humour and mistakenly relating Pontius the Frog to Pontius Pilate).

In a September 2, 1983, editorial, Witvoet told readers, "Humour has religious significance. It is not something merely frivolous." He quoted the late Dr. Peter Steen's view: "'By laughing about [everything that we as human beings do and have in common] we surrender it to God. Here God, you take care of it, because we ... are not able to look after ourselves.'"

### Editorials reveal perspective

Witvoet's editorials insightfully tackled many current issues from a consciously Reformed perspective.

He outlined that perspective and how he saw his role as *Calvinist Contact's* new editor in that September 2, 1983, editorial.

He intended to "nurture an attitude of wanting to hold on to each other while openly discussing differences." An "important theme" during his editorship would be "the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. A good understanding of the Kingdom of Heaven is central to the health and wellbeing of mankind." What that meant, he explained, was the support of "strategically wise and biblical action at the individual and group level," but also "an emphasis on devotion and piety."

### Editorial creed develops

As Witvoet settled into the job, discussions between him and the Editorial Advisory Committee and Board eventually produced an editorial creed. The creed consisted of the typically Reformed creation-fall-redemption biblical motif. It also acknowledged that until Christ returns and His Kingdom is fully realized, journalistic activity would be in constant need of reform.

### A capital controversy

Witvoet's control was quickly seen in week-to-week nitty gritty matters as

well. He made the unconventional decision, to the consternation of readers and employees alike, that C.C. would no longer capitalize proper adjectives. After some months of inconsistent application of that policy, Witvoet defended it in the March 23, 1984, issue.

To a letter in verse form from Owen Sound reader Garth Bierma ("Bert, your specs are foggy, your mind is hazy, / Or have you just gotten lazy?"), Witvoet responded in kind, admitting a "stylistic bias." ("Up with nouns, things that are prior, / Down with adjective and modifier.")

After more months of "persistent complaints," on July 20, 1984, Witvoet waved the white flag of surrender. Canadian Press style — the norm for journalistic style in Canada — would prevail.

### New blood

While Witvoet was still co-editor, there were personnel changes on both coasts. The beginning of 1983 saw Wally van de Kleut come on board as "Alberta Editor." Wilma Binnema Vander Schaaf was now an Alberta correspondent. There were two additional correspondents in B.C. (Brad and Helen Breems), one in Ontario (Margaret Griffioen), and one in Nova Scotia (Jan van der Leest). The Edmonton office was phased out a year later when C.C. could no longer financially support two offices.

But two Alberta journalists, Jeff Adams and Paul De Groot, became C.C. correspondents. A note of interest here: Paul De Groot's wife, Jean DeKoekkoek, is the granddaughter of pioneer editor of *The Canadian Calvinist*, Rev. Paul DeKoekkoek.

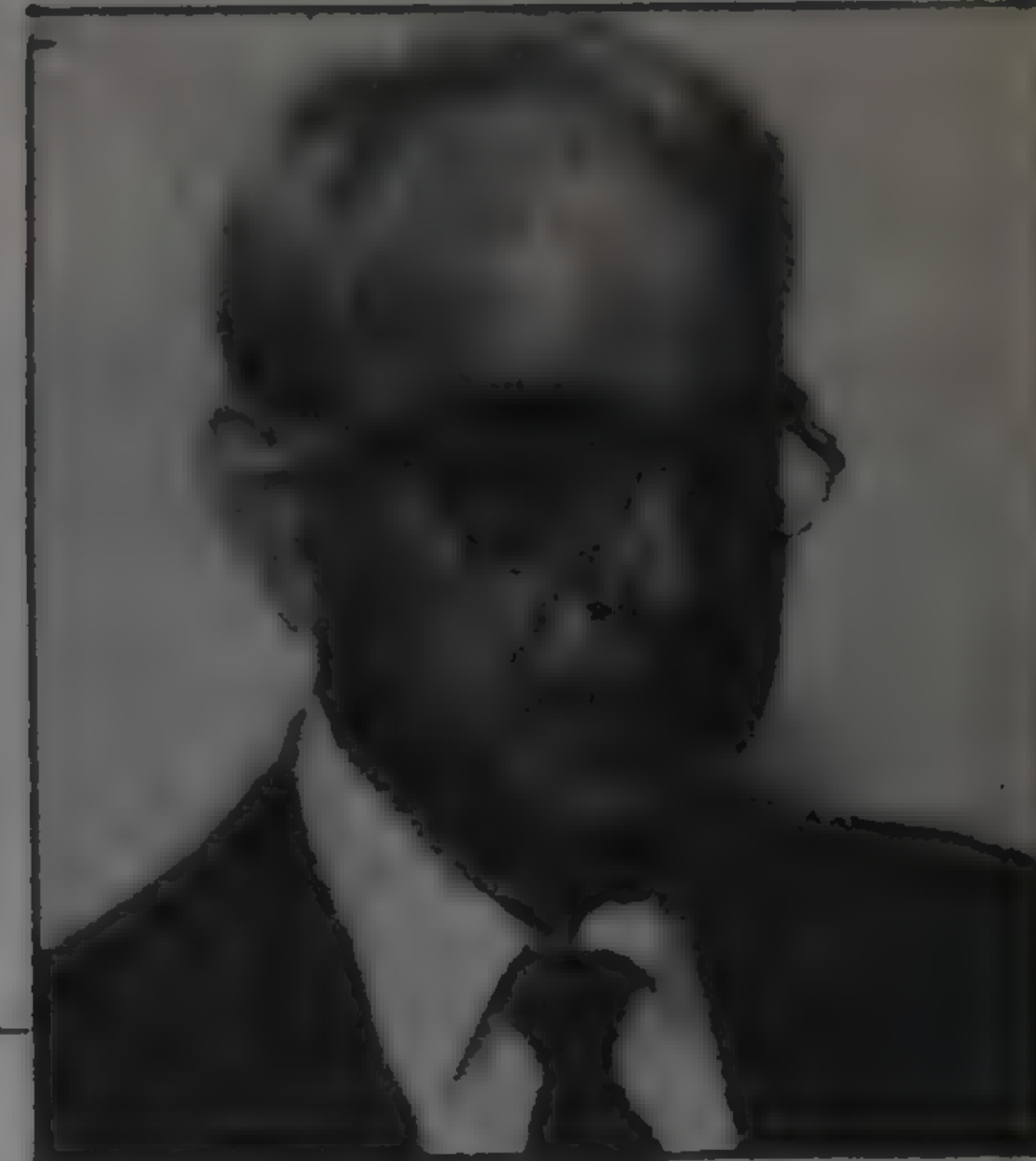
When Bert became sole editor, there were more changes. The "new" feeling

Say Witvoet, why do some people object to me? I have all the right positions on issues. I'm against sin, poverty, abortion on command, nuclear warfare, the use of Dutch in the Canadian Parliament, and children in office.

already evident in the paper intensified. During that initial year, Herman Praamsma, Carl Tuyl, Henry Van Andel, Alice Los, Bernard Zylstra, Jacob Kuntz, Leonard Schalkwyk, and William rang joined C.C. or continued as regular contributors. That same year, Ellen Zwart, now a member of the Editorial Advisory Board, joined the staff as an editorial assistant and Education Page editor.

### New structure includes much "working together"

In January 1984, a ten-person Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) was appointed to "provide continuous advice" for Witvoet. That board consisted of a nationwide mix of men and women who were keenly interested in the course of Reformed journalism in Canada. (Members were Nick Loenen, Richmond, B.C.; Rev. Nicholas Knoppers, Edmonton; Rev. James Ross Dickey, Toronto; William Van Huizen, Beamsville, Ont.; Anne Hutten, Kentville, N.S.; Rev. Jacob Kuntz, then of St. Catharines, Ont.; Ineke Parlevliet, Niagara Falls, Ont.; Ben Vandezande, St. Catharines; Ellen



The deaths of Dr. L. Praamsma (top) and Rev. H. Van Andel in late 1984 marked the end of an era for post-war immigrants.

Zwart, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.; and Stan De Jong, soon to be C.C.'s publisher and business manager.)

A smaller local group called the Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC) would meet monthly with the editor to review specific issues and their contents, and in doing so, provide a constant course down which the paper would travel. The EAC consisted of the five last-mentioned EAB members above.

### More internal reorganization

C.C.'s internal reorganization continued well into 1984. In April of that year, Stan De Jong assumed the role of publisher and office manager. His managerial skills gradually helped pull the paper out of the financial mire.

Ellen Zwart's other commitments caused her to leave C.C. in May 1984. Marian Van Til came on board at that time as the sole editorial assistant. Her main responsibility initially was as Church Page editor, with the Education Page editorship going to a second more recent editorial assistant, Henry de Jong. Several months later, Van Til was given a near-weekly movie review column, an area into which C.C. had never before ventured.

### Editorial team

In the summer of 1985, editorial duties were revamped once more. Witvoet was feeling increasingly bogged down with the minutiae of day-to-day editing responsibilities. He regretted having little or no time to read — to keep up with other papers, and to maintain the broadest possible knowledge of current events in diverse fields.

To alleviate that problem, Van Til was given many more editing tasks. In addition, she, Henry de Jong, and layout person Margaret Griffioen (who was trained as a journalist) would ferret out (or write) front page news stories and write other news stories and features.

That four-person team, now in place, is surprisingly diverse. Witvoet brings his experience as an immigrant, an educator, and a critic of the Reformed community to bear on his writing. Van Til, who is a musician-teacher as well as writer, brings her experience in the arts, liturgy, and the church in general to her writing. De Jong, who is keenly

Continued on page 30...



## The man Bert Witvoet

*Calvinist Contact's* current editor Bert (Albertus) Witvoet, like his predecessors, was born in The Netherlands (in 1934). Witvoet received his elementary and high school education in Joure, his hometown. Four years after his father passed away in 1946, Bert's mother and her seven children immigrated to Bowmanville, Ontario.

Bert did farm work that first summer in Canada and subsequently got a job at the local Good Year plant. After four and one-half years there, he set off for Calvin College; he graduated in 1959.

Witvoet then spent 18 years as a high school teacher in both Christian and public schools. During that period he was teacher at Hamilton District Christian High, vice-principal of Toronto District Christian High, English/theatre arts teacher at Toronto's Harbord Collegiate and principal of Scarborough Christian Secondary School. While teaching at Harbord, Witvoet completed a Master's degree in English at the University of Toronto.

Witvoet's interest in writing began in childhood and he wrote and published his own paper while in high school.

From 1964-69 Witvoet was editor of the *Christian School Herald*. He was then co-editor of *Vanguard* for two years. After a six-year hiatus, Witvoet returned to *Vanguard* as editor from 1978-1981. In the fall of 1982 he joined *Calvinist Contact* as co-editor with Keith Knight. A year later, he took on sole editorship of the paper.

Witvoet is married to fellow immigrant Alice Oldejans, whom he met in Canada. They have a daughter and four sons, two of whom are still in elementary and high school.

MVT



# Calvinist Contact: 1982 to the present

...continued from page 29.

interested in music as well as education, is the philosophic musier of the bunch. Griffioen has an ability to make "human interest" and youth stories come alive.

This diversification of tasks has — we think — already begun to increase the quality of the paper.

## The age of technology arrives at C.C.!

There is really a fifth editorial team member whose place is not to be underestimated: the word processor.

Since the spring of 1985, that amazing machine has been saving countless hours a month in writing, editing, and typing time.

A second "master" computer has made the mailing process and subscription records equally efficient.



## Social context: the trend toward conservatism

As Bert Witvoet took the helm of *Calvinist Contact*, North American society was evidencing a new and pervasive conservatism. Ronald Reagan had become U.S. President two years earlier, and in Canada, the Tories took hold of the federal government.

Nor did the Church escape that conservative spirit.

The fall of 1982 saw the first issue of the newly Canadianized bi-weekly, *Christian Renewal*. That paper — originally published in Iowa — was developed to decry "liberal" Christian Reformed trends such as "women in office."

The debate on women in the church began in C.C. in 1977 and thereafter was always closely tied to CRC synodical decisions on the matter. C.C.'s editorial stance was sympathetic to the full participation of women in the church, though the paper allowed equal space to the pro and con positions. In certain corners, C.C.'s stance did not win her new friends and perhaps lost her a few old ones.

Some began to view C.C. as a "liberal" paper. But by-and-large, Witvoet's guidance helped the paper maintain its place as a moderate but probing voice in and to the Reformed community in Canada.

## Open windows

During the first months of 1983, C.C. contained an extraordinary number of series articles on a range of topics — social issues, human relationships, biographical vignettes, and so on.

It gradually became more interested in church affairs beyond the Christian Reformed orbit. A Presbyterian voice was especially evident. The preface to an April 1 article, "Presbyterian Renewal Fellowship Knox it to them," (that had to be a Witvoet headline!) explained that C.C. was attempting "to open windows to other Christian churches around us."

That attempt has continued to the present, as obvious by the range of news items which appear on C.C.'s two church pages.

Throughout 1983, there were frequent guest editorials by such diverse personages as Ed Vander Kloet, Nick Loenen, Bert Polman, Ben Vandezande, and Frank and Aria Sawyer.

Another window opened to children. In March 1983, Doro Bakker's page "For Kids Only" commenced. That page, though one of quality, is at present in danger of extinction from lack of interest by too many of today's television-saturated children.

## How long Dutch?

In the April 29, 1983, issue Witvoet renewed the "Dutch controversy" which Keith Knight had inadvertently started several years earlier. That issue and two subsequent ones defended Witvoet's view: he wanted to do away with the Dutch section entirely. He was convinced C.C. should appeal to a broader spectrum of Christians and especially to the younger generation of the Reformed community. Dropping the Dutch would help, he said.

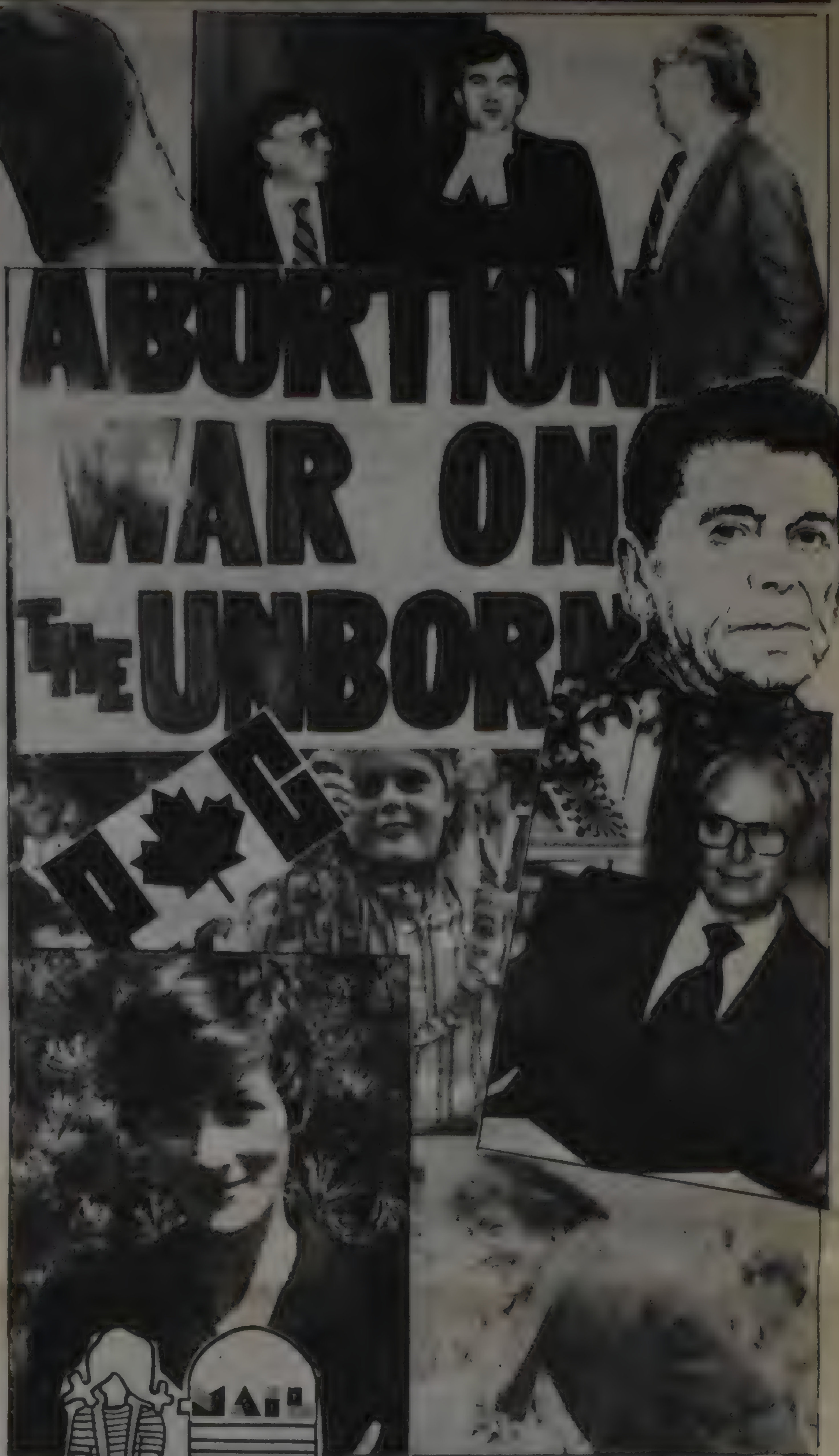
Readers would have none of it, however. Witvoet eventually conceded that the time had not yet come for so "drastic" a measure. Two Dutch pages would be eliminated but their writers would still contribute to the paper — in English. The matter was finally laid to rest during the summer of 1983.

## Former editor dies

The first 1983 issue provided low-key notice of the death of former editor (of *The Canadian Calvinist*) Rev. Paul DeKoekkoek. Rev. Bastiaan Nederlof wrote the eulogy.

## It's a wide world

While continuing to make readers aware of such news from within the Christian Reformed community, *Calvinist Contact* was striving to



*Calvinist Contact* in the eighties is characterized by on-the-spot reporting and interviews against the background of a growing participation in social and political questions and a growing conservatism. Pictured here are (from top to bottom) the stories on a turkey farmer, Lyle McBurney's successful case versus the Queen, the huge anti-abortion rally in Toronto, Reagan, Dr. Pitt of the ICS, Ria Kroezen, and Dutch Princess Margriet.

stimulate their awareness of and interest in a more expansive world.

It continues to do that from week to week with a current office staff of nine men and women with very distinct personalities and talents.

Each of those people forms a link (or two) in the chain that enables *Calvinist Contact* to be churned out, on time, 47 times a year. And not just "churned out," but produced in the best way they know how for the benefit — it is hoped — of all Canadian Calvinists.

The front page was designed, free of charge, by Willem Hart Art & Design, 203 Carlton St., Toronto, Ont.

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# Canadian Calvinism: another 40 years?

Bert Witvoet

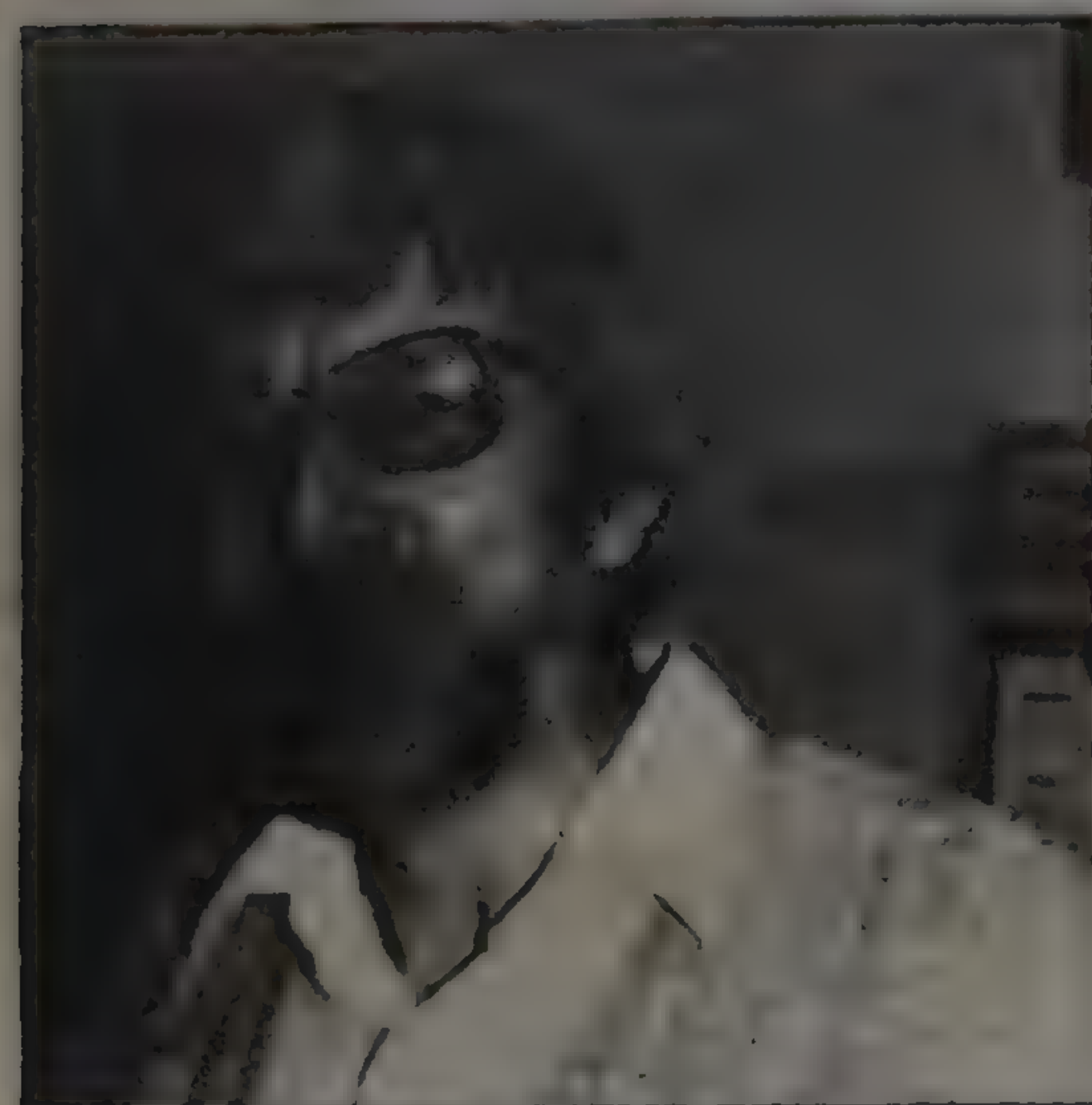
There is no doubt that *Calvinist Contact* has served an important function in helping Dutch immigrants of Reformed background adjust to their new surroundings in Canada. It was a necessary function. One cannot quickly shed one's background without running into serious problems of dislocation. The best way of transplanting a tree is to carry some of the soil along with it.

Dr. Vrieze points out in his brief tribute to *Calvinist Contact* (elsewhere in this issue) that this is a temporary function, which, nevertheless, may keep us occupied for another 40 years.

Someone from The Netherlands responded to a news item in the Dutch daily *Trouw* about C.C.'s 40th anniversary by writing, "I believe it's a beautiful and good work that you perform, but isn't it a declining business?"

Perhaps, from a sociological point of view, it is. The specific task of *Calvinist Contact* to help a community through a

## A paper for all Reformed people



Merely to survive as an independent Christian periodical in Canada for 40 years is a noteworthy accomplishment. To achieve that goal with a healthy prospect for a vital future is a real cause for thanksgiving.

As one who does not belong to that segment of the Reformed community which may think that *Calvinist Contact* is just for them — I perhaps have a somewhat divergent hope for what this publication may come to be in the future.

Most sections of the Reformed community in Canada are served by their official denominational publications. It would be my hope that C.C. may more and more become that non-denominational publication which informs and reflects the viewpoint of all who are happy to be part of the Reformed community.

If that challenge is accepted, then, of course, denominational activities and programs would receive appropriate notice and comment. There is surely a genuine need for all of us who live in the fragmented Reformed community in Canada to become more conscious of its various manifestations. Only then can individual impressions be tested and stereotypes renounced.

If *Calvinist Contact* can fill that role then it seems to me that it may have a useful and unique contribution to make for decades yet to come.

Rev. Robert J. Bernhardt,  
Chalmers Presbyterian Church,  
Hamilton, Ont.

period of transition from Dutch consciousness to Canadian identity is a temporary, declining business. But is that all that *Calvinist Contact* has been? Was the vision of its founders to be "Canadian Calvinists" and to strengthen the witness of Calvinism in Canada just that — a vision?

## A lump of yeast

There is no simple answer to that question. *Calvinist Contact* can publish all the lofty ideals Reformed thinkers are capable of spinning out in lengthy articles (including this one), but its destiny is closely wrapped up with that of the community it has served for 40 years. It may have tried to give good leadership from time to time, but a leading paper can only be one or two steps ahead of the group it wants to lead. If it is ahead more, the chances of being followed are slim.

So the question really is, does the Reformed community look as if it can be a vital lump of yeast in the Canadian loaf? And a second question follows: is it willing to be kneaded into the same lump with other Canadian Calvinists who have a desire to serve Christ the King? What has happened to the challenge placed before readers of *The Canadian Calvinist* in the August 15 issue of 1946 (!) by Dr. W. Stanford Reid (then pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Montreal): "The day is coming soon when we Canadian Calvinists will have to draw closer together for the good of our country and the spread of the Gospel?"

At best we can say that the Reformed witness has been heard, but it was not heard loud and clear. There was too much fragmentation of Reformed churches (we simply duplicated the Dutch church scene and added one or two more of our own); and people of the same church could not agree on whether our obedience should be active or passive, partial or whole.

As a result *Calvinist Contact* has also been heard, but not loud and clear. Polarization, especially in the Toronto district in the seventies and in the Niagara Peninsula in the eighties, have weakened the fabric of the Reformed community. Precious resources of time and talent have been wasted on peripheral issues. We agree with Syrt Wolters that the real enemy, secularism, will not be tackled when we expend so much of our energy and time on the question whether women may be elders or deacons. (C.C., August 30, 1985)

## Not satisfied with branch

There are some who may question the need for a strong Calvinist presence in Canada. They are bothered by the fact that Calvinism as they know it is incomplete and excludes other Christians. One of the previous editors of *Calvinist Contact* felt that way. Ad. Otten was bothered by the fact that the Christian Reformed Church he belonged to did not have an "open" Lord's Supper. The label "Christian" was more important to him than the label "Calvinist." For that reason he left the Christian Reformed Church and resigned as editor of a "Calvinist" weekly.

Many of us probably entertain a similar longing to identify with the Church Universal rather than with only one of its branches. But, no matter how

## The man Stan De Jong

Stan De Jong is the publisher and office manager of Knight Publishing, the company that publishes *Calvinist Contact*. To his closer associates, Stan is known as "Sense," which is his baptismal name.

Stan was born on July 18, 1934, in Vlagtwedde, The Netherlands (a month after Bert Witvoet was born 50 miles west of Vlagtwedde). After attending elementary and high school, he immigrated to Canada in 1953 — 18 years old, single and eligible. In 1958 he married Corrie Smit, originally from Surhuisterveen, The Netherlands. Together they have four children and five grandchildren.

Stan's career began in accounting. From 1955 to 1960 he worked for the Bank of Montreal, and from 1960 to 1965 he worked in the accounting department of Dupont of Canada, Sarnia, Ontario.

The next 15 years were spent as representative for the Christian Labour Association of Canada. He worked from the Toronto, Edmonton and St. Catharines offices in sequence. While he was with the CLAC, Stan was a member of the editorial committee of the CLAC publication, *The Guide*. In 1980, he left the CLAC.

From 1980 till 1984 Stan freelanced in St. Catharines. He worked for Outreach Niagara, a Christian community service. His work included accounting and managing. He remained with that organization until he assumed his responsibilities at Knight Publishing.

Important to Stan and to the work he was to do for *Calvinist Contact* was the fact that he has been a member of the Christian Reformed Board of Publications for several terms. His first term was coincidental with the beginning of the Board. He was also a member of the editorial committee of *Vanguard* when it was published in Edmonton. In the '80s he joined the editorial board of *Calvinist Contact*.

Stan's hopes for *Calvinist Contact* are that "it may increasingly become an instrument for giving reformational direction to God's people in Canada." He adds, "I want to work hard to enlarge its readership."



strong our longing may be, there is no group that one can join which adequately represents that universal church. Somehow, one always ends up on a branch rather than in the tree. In fact, one may even end up on a dead branch!

## A question of totus and sola

Though we may admit that Calvinism as it manifests itself is incomplete, we should realize that a Christian presence in Canada that does not include Calvinism is the weaker for it. What does Calvinism bring to the Christian witness that other Christian traditions like Anabaptism, Roman Catholicism, Fundamentalism, Pentecostalism and mainline Protestantism do not?

Calvinism stresses the "totus" aspect of Christianity: the *total* sovereignty of God, the *total* helplessness of fallen man and the *total* redemption of life in Christ.

We can also use another Latin term: "sola," meaning "alone," to represent Calvinism. In his convocation address of 1984, Rev. Henry De Bolster, President of Redeemer College in Hamilton, Ontario, characterized Reformedness by talking about "by Scripture *alone*, to God *alone*, by faith *alone* and by grace *alone*." The word "total" stresses inclusion; whereas "alone" suggests exclusion. Both address themselves to the peculiar scope of the gospel.

Without becoming relativistic, saying that one tradition is as good as the next, or without becoming triumphalistic, saying that ours is the only one, we may appreciate the distinct contribution Calvinism can make to the full-orbed witness of the Church of Christ. For that reason we are grateful to be Canadian Calvinists.

## Calvinism for sale

For that reason we are also grateful

that, by the grace of God, *Calvinist Contact* has been a blessing to many people. But honesty requires of us that we admit that these many people have been mostly Christian Reformed, and that the point of view by and for these people has often been too inward-looking. Yet, the vision was that we would be a blessing to our *nation*! Even an immigrant situation does not justify a narrow, inward-looking perspective.

When one reads the early (1950s) issues of *Calvinist Contact*, one will be struck by the outward-looking mentality of those early immigrants. The October 22, 1954, issue carries a report on a Simcoe League field day. The Revs. Wildschut and Schaafsma spoke on "Calvinists and Calvinism in Canada." These men pointed out "that there must be Calvinism in our homes, schools, hospitals, labour and also in our political life. The Christian press must be encouraged and not left to die as has been done in the past." That was perceived to be the task in 1954 when people were thrown into a strange and unsettling experience called immigration.

Now ask members of the Reformed community today what the challenge is. Half of them will tell you that it concerns the matter of holding on to the historic Christian faith. We think they are wrong, dead wrong. The challenge of our time does not lie in whether we hold on to the historic Christian faith but in whether we put it to work! We are in danger of burying our treasure because we are afraid that we will lose it in the market place!

The irony of attempts to hold on to what the Lord gives us is that it slips through our fingers because it does not yield any increase. The warning of the parable of the talents is clear: those who have not (gained), will lose even what they have. That has been the story of all

Continued on page 36 ...





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# Looking ahead — the challenge for Calvinism in Canada

As our readers may know, Dr. Zylstra is battling terminal cancer at this time. Yet he was willing and able to write this ringing challenge to his fellow Calvinists. We gratefully accept his contribution to our 40th anniversary edition.

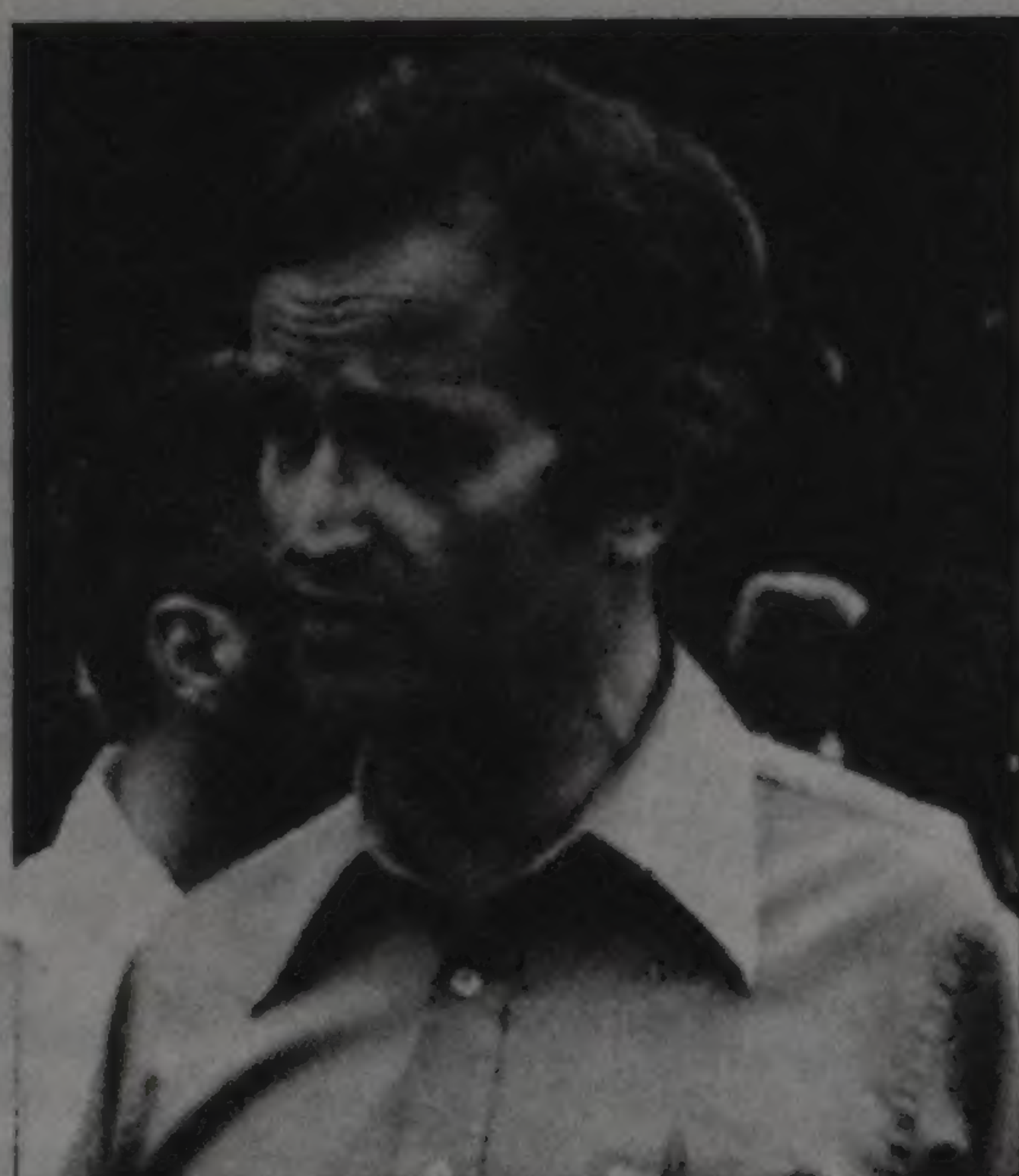
## Bernard Zylstra

Let's take a look at the 40 years that lie ahead. Will there be a meaningful role for *Calvinist Contact*? Will there be room for Calvinists in Canada? There will be, if they display an intense spiritual resilience in maintaining their identity in a distinctly challenging and even threatening cultural climate. This becomes clear when we compare the key marks of Calvinism with the key features of modern society and culture.

The spirituality of Calvinism displays many characteristics among which the following stand out:

• **The glory of God.** Perhaps the most fundamental starting point of Calvinism is to be found in the biblical theme of the glory of God as summarized by Paul, "For from Him and through Him and unto Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Rom. 11:36) Since it proceeds from this theme, Calvinism is distinguished from other forms of Christian spirituality.

• **Creatures are servants.** Derived from this starting point is its immediate corollary: To be a creature is to be a servant of God. "All things are Thy servants." (Ps. 119:19) Calvinism therefore has a very positive view of creation and its history. Creation is the theatre of God's glory. When Satan planned to rob that glory by throwing



creation into sin, God sent His Son to redeem creation. Hence redemption is the restoration of creation to serve its Maker.

• **Life is religion.** In this light the Calvinist holds that human life in its entirety is religion: service of God made possible through the reconciliation of Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the regeneration of our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Since that service is all encompassing, there is no possibility for religious neutrality in human life, in culture, or in society.

Now compare these marks of Calvinism with the outstanding features of modern society. Here I rely on Os Guinness' remarkably insightful book *The Gravedigger File: Papers on the Subversion of the Modern Church*. (Inter-Varsity, 1983.) In his view modern society displays these features:

• **Secularization.** "The process through which, starting from the center and moving outward, successive sectors of society and culture have been freed from the decisive influence of religious

ideas and institutions." (p. 71)

• **Privatization.** "The process by which modernization produces a cleavage between the public and the private spheres of life and focuses the private sphere as the special arena for the expansion of individual freedom and fulfilment." (p. 74) Religion is then strictly limited to the private sphere.

• **Pluralization.** "The process by which the number of options in the private sphere of modern society rapidly multiplies at all levels, especially at the level of world views, faiths and ideologies." (p. 93)

These features of modern society have contributed to the near-collapse of Christianity in Western Europe, including Calvinism in Holland. In North America, however, an increasing number of Christians are critical of these features. This situation provides an unusual challenge to Calvinism in Canada and the U.S.

Because of its spiritual traits outlined above, Calvinism thoroughly rejects the secularization, privatization and pluralization of society. It shares that rejection with the neo-conservative resurgence of fundamentalism in North

American Christianity today. However, this resurgence is "thin on cultural awareness, scholarship and intellectual staying power." (*Time Magazine*, Sept. 2, 1985, p. 51)

The spiritual reformation which Christianity in Canada sorely needs will require more "gifts of the Spirit" than are normally present in Calvinism. But this reformation does need the gifts of "cultural awareness, scholarship and intellectual staying power." The "Dutch" Reformed community has been endowed with these gifts.

During the next 40 years one of the main tasks of *Calvinist Contact* is to contribute to the deepening and broadening of those gifts within its reading constituency. The educational institutions have already been built. Moreover, during the next 40 years this community itself should increasingly learn to share these gifts with the larger Christian world, particularly the evangelical-fundamental communities with which it is spiritually aligned.

This is an immense challenge!

*Dr. Bernard Zylstra is professor of political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies.*

## C.C.'s ABC

Als je 't mij vraagt, C.C. is a choice periodical.

Bert as editor is clear and methodical.

Cross Examination and Chalkmarks are educational.

Dutch Section has appeal that is multi-generational.

Editorials comment on a whole range of questions.

For Kids Only has many creative suggestions.

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Just a Moment, a "Hermaneutic" that gives you pause.

Kuyper's Kapers proposes a new Kristian Kaucus

Letters have comments that sometimes shock us.

Mediascan helps with entertainment selection.  
News you can find in the Classified Section.  
Onder de Streep is a window to days long ago.  
Pontius' Puddle a frog with potential to grow.  
Quality Reports come from home and abroad.  
Rime or Reason? ask Klaas Sis and Sy Nodd.  
Skylights rings true and Small Talk gets attention.  
Thinkbit is witty beyond comprehension.  
Unity, needless to say, is a must.  
Van Halsema Onthult how Dutch people adjust.  
Witvoet wields words with wisdom and wit.  
Xpertly crafted and skillfully knit.  
Young and old can enjoy this good paper.  
Zealously works the C.C. staff to shape her.

**Winnie Van Andel,**  
Wife of former columnist  
**Rev. H. Van Andel,**  
Burnaby, BC

Forty years of good publication  
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May there be many good years yet in stock  
And continue as always to "Build on the Rock."

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BOUWE VISSER



FILE

Calvinist Contact  
99 Niagara Street  
St. Catharines Ontario  
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Dear Christian Friends,

August 26 1985

I hereby send congratulations and best wishes, with the 40th anniversary of your weekly "Calvinist Contact." May the Lord continue to bless you in your efforts and may your paper be a blessing to many.

I greatly would appreciate to receive your "Anniversary Number".

With greetings

In His Service

*Bouwe Visser*  
Bouwe Visser

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July 10, 1985

Calvinist Contact  
99 Niagara Street  
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Dear Friends:

It gives me pleasure to inform you that the Synod of 1985, in session on June 15, 1985, adopted the following congratulatory resolution to be sent to Calvinist Contact:

"On August 6, 1985, the Calvinist Contact hopes to celebrate its 40th anniversary as a Reformed voice in Canada. On September 13, 1985, this journal plans to publish a special edition. In view of this occasion, the officers recommend that Synod send a message to Calvinist Contact, extending to the publisher, staff and readership sincere congratulations upon the occasion of the paper's 40th anniversary. This is done in recognition of the worthwhile contribution that the Calvinist Contact has made to the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, to the Reformed community in general, and to Canadian Society at large."

Sincerely,

*Leonard J. Hoffman*  
Leonard J. Hoffman  
Stated Clerk



# De beste wensen van Arie en Katrien

De echtelijke twist is tot een bevredigend einde gekomen, en in volle en nieuwe vrede zitten Katrien en ik de kranten te lezen, beiden overtuigd van eigen gelijk, maar ook beiden moe van onenigheid.

Als *Calvinist Contact* er niet was geweest, zouden we nooit het bovengenoemde meningsverschil hebben gehad. We zijn allebei gehecht aan ons blad. We verheugen ons in het veertigjarig jubileum. En omdat ons hart in *Calvinist Contact* zit, grijpen we elke week naar de nieuwe editie, waarbij Katrien meestal het meest succes heeft.

## Jij zat zeker te slapen

Gisteren vroeg ik aan mijn vrouw: "Is *Calvinist Contact* deze week niet gekomen? Ik heb hem nog helemaal niet gezien." Het gebeurt helaas wel vaker, dank zij de langzaam werkende postdiensten, dat het blad laat komt. Maar dit keer kreeg de postdienst niet de schuld. "O ja," antwoordde Katrien, "*Calvinist Contact* is eergisteren al gekomen. Ik heb er je nog uit voorgelezen, maar jij zat zeker te slapen."

Ik op zoek naar het vermiste blad. Ik keek in de krantenbak, achter de boeken, in de keuken, in de bathroom, maar nergens een spoor van *Calvinist Contact*. Mijn oude natuur kwam helaas naar boven, en ik begon onheuse opmerkingen te maken en verwijten te uiten aan het adres van Katrien, die ook niet op haar mondje gevallen is en mij scherp van reepiek diende. Een kleine burgeroorlog!

"Je zult er wel wat in gepakt hebben en toen de zaak in de vuilnisbak

gesmeten hebben," stelde ik sarcastisch voor, wel op de hoogte van de gewoonte van mijn vrouw, om alles wat vet is aan etensresten, zoals kippenbeentjes en spekranden, in krantenpapier te wikkelen alvorens het in de vuilnisemmer te deponeren. Deze suggestie werd door Katrien verontwaardigd verworpen.

En zo gingen we gisteren naar bed met de spanning als een ijsberg tussen ons, en zo sliepen we de afgelopen nacht met de ruggen naar elkaar toe, en dat alles vanwege ons nooit volprezen blad *Calvinist Contact*...

## Iedereen heeft wel eens een ongelukje

Toen ik vanmiddag thuis kwam, was Katrien druk aan het strijken in de keuken. Nu is dat geen ongewoon gezicht. Maar het vreemde was, dat ze bezig was met het strijken van krantenpapier. Nieuwsgierig trad ik nader, en daar zag ik zowaar het jongste nummer van *Calvinist Contact*, zwaar gehavend, gerimpeld en gekreukeld, vol met vetvlekken, en helemaal uit elkaar op de keukentafel liggen. En Katrien maar bezig met een warme strijkbout om de schade glad te strijken, wat maar gedeeltelijk lukte.

Ik was verstandig genoeg, om niet te vragen, wat er gebeurd was met onze geliefde weekly. Het was zonder meer duidelijk: Katrien had per ongeluk een paar uitgekookte soepbotten in krantenpapier gepakt en weggegooid. En het krantenpapier luisterde naar de naam *Calvinist Contact*.

Ik keek slechts verwijtend en schudde mijn wijze hoofd, waarop mijn vrouw bits opmerkte: "Iedereen heeft wel eens een ongelukje...", waarop ik niet kon laten haar woorden aan te vullen met het gevleugelde gezegde: "...ja, maar een lomperd het meest!" Ze maakte een dreigend gebaar met de strijkbout en ik bukte me haastig. Dit had het gelukkige effect, dat we beiden de zothed van de situatie inzagen en elkaar lachend in de armen vielen. Einde van de huwelijksruzie!

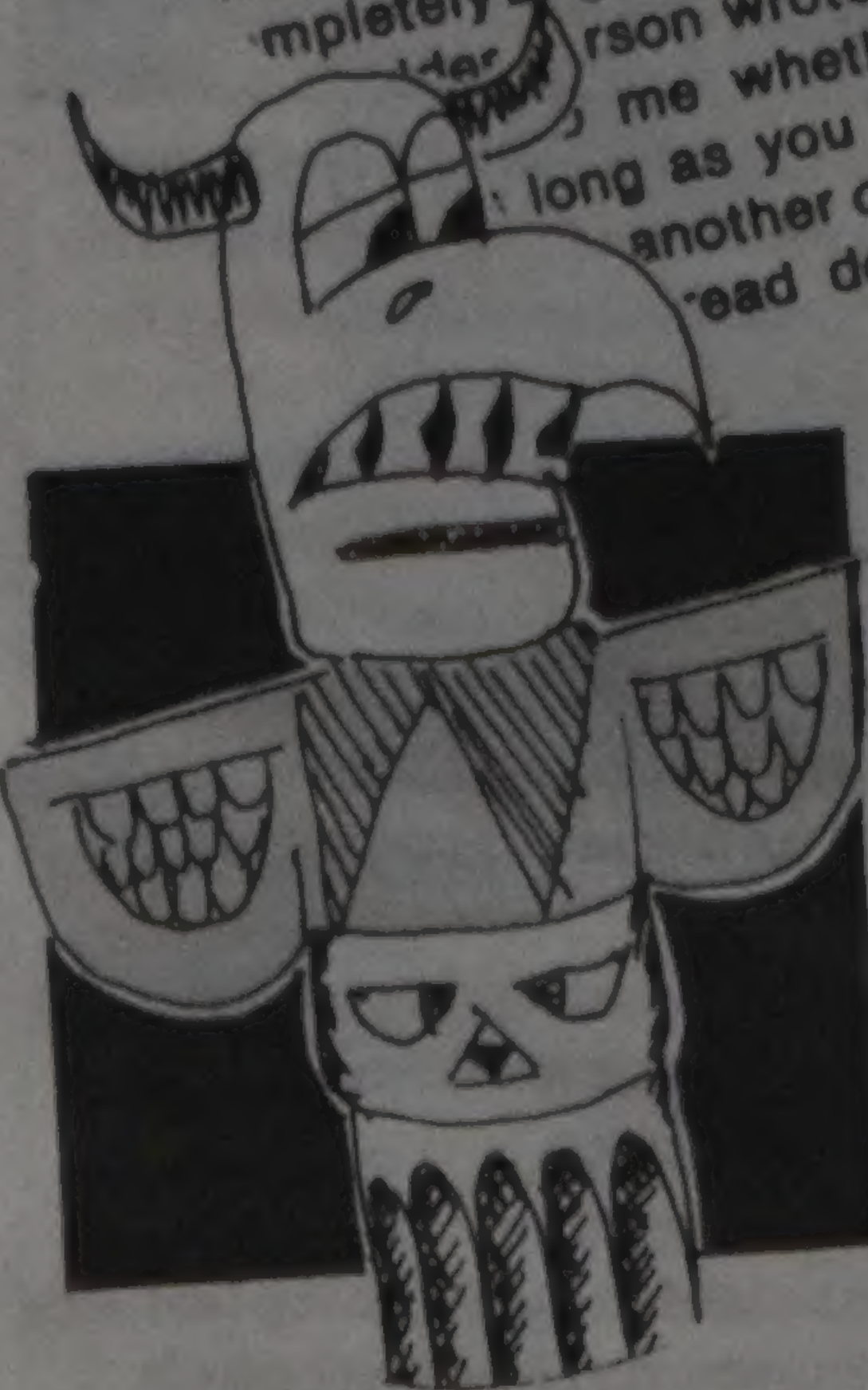
## Ondanks de kreukels

Nu zitten we beiden rustig te lezen; Katrien in een plaatselijk blad, dat tweemaal per week verschijnt, en ik in

We'll keep the Dutch and stay in touch

Bert Witvoet

We have carried a lengthy discussion in our paper about the idea of dropping the Dutch. Feelings against dropping the Dutch were stronger than we had anticipated. It seems that our community is not yet ready to go for a completely English C.C.



Het besluit om door te gaan met Hollandse artikelen in C.C. bracht opluchting voor vele lezers en zelfs schrijvers zoals de Jong, Van Harmelen, Tuyl en Wolters.

de gehavende editie van *Calvinist Contact*. Het is geen gemakkelijke taak. Telkens moet ik met mijn hand over het papier strijken of aan de hoeken trekken, om te kunnen lezen wat er staat.

Op de voorpagina prijkt het immer vriendelijk grijnzende gelaat van de president van Redeemer College. De foto is omringd door een grote, gele vetvlek, hetgeen een verrassend effect geeft. Het is alsof het gelaat omgeven is met een lichtkrans, zoals men dat wel ziet in illustraties van roomse heiligen.

Voor de nieuwsrubriek van Ds. Tuyl heeft veel schade geleden en is haast onleesbaar. Gelukkig kan ik het humoristische slot nog ontcijferen. Hoewel het nieuws voor ons meestal wat oud en belegen is, lezen we Tuyl heel graag. Hij moet wel een gezellige man en innemende prater zijn.

Katrien heeft altijd veel schik van de jonge Praamsma. Zijn

voortstrevende blik en frisse stijl spreken ons beiden aan.

Nu ik toch bezig ben met complimentjes aan het adres van de tegenwoordige medewerkers aan *Calvinist Contact*, wil ik de hoofdredakteur met zijn schone indiaanse naam Witvoet niet vergeten. We hebben respect voor zijn inzicht, waarderen de diep-christelijke inhoud van zijn artikelen, en beminnen zijn takt en wijsheid. Dat hij zo door moge gaan en dat het hem niet te zeer mag verdrieten, dat hij niet altijd door iedereen begrepen wordt. Dat is immers het lot van alle genieën!

Al deze lof en prijs betekent natuurlijk niet dat Katrien en ik alles met tevredenheid slikken, wat *Calvinist Contact* opdist. Geenszins! Zo heb ik Katrien al meerdere malen horen zeggen tot de schrijver van "Als je het mij vraagt": "Man, ik vraag je toch niks!"

En evenals de cartoons van Pontius' Puddle onze lachspieren in beweging brengen, zo werken bepaalde artikelen van hooggeleerde filosofen op onze slaapspieren.

## Huwelijks- en rouwberichten

Overigens gaat het ons als de meeste lezers van ons voortreffelijk blad: De familieberichten trekken onze eerste aandacht. Daarin lezen we van het lief en leed van bekenden en onbekenden en voelen we de band met onze geloofsgenoten van heinde en van ver in droefheid en in vreugd. We achten het een aanwinst, dat tegenwoordig ook dikwijls de foto's van jubilerende echtparen worden geplaatst. Soms zie je er oude bekenden bij, die je in jaren al niet ontmoet hebt. Dan zeg je wel eens: "Wat zijn die mensen oud geworden!" waarop Katrien veelbetekenend naar de spiegel wijst.

Het is dikwijls de moeite waard, om de gelaatsuitdrukkingen van de gefotografeerde echtparen te bestuderen. Sommige jubilarissen staan er op met een verlegen glimlach;

Vervolg op pagina 35...

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## Onder de SCHEMERLAMP

### Beste Lezeressen (en Lezers!)

“Long time, no see,” zoals ze hier zeggen. Wie had nu gedacht dat u die trouwe Schemerlamp nog eens terug zou zien in *Calvinist Contact*? Ik niet. Niemand kon meer verbaasd zijn dan deze vrouw toen ik op een morgen om half negen werd opgebeld uit St. Catharines door onze redacteur, Bert Witvoet. Of ik maar even voor een Schemerlamp wilde zorgen... En in de kortste keren, alsjeblieft, want het was voor C.C.'s jubileum nummer!

Moet u weten dat ik net thuisgekomen was van vakantie met een daverende keelontsteking, zodat ik amper praten kon. Bert moet wel gedacht hebben: wat heb ik nou voor een krakerig geval aan de lijn? Maar hij trof het. De ochtend daarvóór was mijn stem compleet zoek. Wat m'n geliefde de opmerking ontlokte: “Dat kan een lekker rustig dagje worden, zeg!” (De schelm.)

Maar laat ik eerst ons *Calvinist Contact* van harte gelukwensen met die veertigste verjaardag! Ik hoop dat het blad ook in de toekomst een belangrijke rol zal spelen in het leven van christelijk Canada. Veertig jaren hebben, in mensenogen, altijd een lange periode gevormd. De jaren tussen 1945 en 1985 vormen echter, voor redenen die ik bepaald niet hoeft op te noemen, een tijdperk dat in onze ogen veel langer schijnt.

Zoals vele na-oorlogse immigranten was ik in 1945 een teenager, in een land dat was uitgemergeld door Hitler's horde en extatisch in z'n vreugde om de bevrijding. Als Rode Kruis vrijwilliger ging ik van huis tot huis in mijn door de oorlog geschonden stad, om slachtoffers van honger-oedeem te rapporteren. (Nu sturen we voedsel naar de honger-lijdens in Afrika!)

Onze Canadese bevrijders waren overal en werden gastvrij onthaald. Toch, het enige wat ik toen van Canada wist was, dat het een enorm en dunbevolkt land was aan de andere kant van de oceaan. Over emigreren sprak nog niemand. We waren te druk bezig om op adem te komen en van onze herwonnen vrijheid te genieten.

Maar zeven jaar later zat ik met mijn man op het dek van de “Groote Beer,” terwijl de lichtjes van Hoek van Holland

verdwenen in een duisternis die voor ons letterlijk en figuurlijk was: we waren daar aan boord droevig overtuigd dat we ons landje aan de Noordzee nimmer terug zouden zien! Wisten wij, dat we de moeizame reis die tien of elf dagen duurde later in acht uur zouden maken? Meer dan eens en op ons dooie gemak?

Het was, naar ik meen, in 1955 dat ik medewerker werd van het toen populaire maandblad *Home and Family*. Dit blad was onder de redactie van Mr. Ad. Otten, die ook als redacteur van C.C. fungeerde toen beide bladen gecombineerd werden. De rubriek “Onder de Schemerlamp” verscheen n.l. voor de eerste maal in het blad *Home and Family* en was voor een groot deel zijn idee. De bedoeling was dat we, speciaal aan de vrouwelijke helft van het lezers-publiek, de gelegenheid gaven om zich uit te spreken en over allerlei onderwerpen van gedachten te wisselen. Dat plaatje boven de rubriek, van een moeder die gezellig zit te breien, was een beetje misleidend: we hebben het bij mijn weten nooit over handwerken gehad.

Wat wel aan de orde kwam, waren problemen in huwelijk en gezin; vragen over het christelijk geloof, meningsverschillen in de kerk, aanpassing in Canada, heimwee, boeken en andere lectuur uit Holland, enz.

En al spoedig bleek uit de brieven die ik ontving dat deze rubriek niet alleen gewaardeerd werd door lezeressen, maar ook door lezers. Die vonden het blijkbaar interessant om nu eens te horen wat vrouwen er van dachten. Wat bij tijden wel een openbaring voor hen geweest moet zijn, want de meeste briefschrijfsters staken hun mening niet onder stoelen of banken.

Wat ik dikwijls ontroerend vond was het grote vertrouwen dat C.C.'s lezers stelden in hun “Saskia.” Ze stortten zonder aarzeling hun hart uit bij een vrouw die toch eigenlijk een vreemde voor hen was. Ze bespraken vragen met me, waarover ze met hun geestelijke leiders niet of niet meer konden praten. Ze kwamen met dingen, die ze in hun eigen familie niet kwijt konden, misschien omdat ze niemand ongerust wilden maken. Het was een vertrouwen dat van Saskia's kant nooit gebroken werd: briefschrijvers die hun geloofs-vragen en persoonlijke moeilijkheden met me deelden werden mijn vrienden,

in de volle zin van het woord.

Dit betekent niet, dat we hen in de kolommen van C.C. altijd snel uit de perikelen konden helpen. Maar het houdt wel in dat we bereid waren om naar elke lezer te luisteren en haar/hem, zo nodig met vereende krachten, van advies te dienen. Ik denk dat u ervan vermeld zou staan als u wist hoeveel eenzaamheid er toen in onze kring was. Het is een eenzaamheid, die nu weer veel sterker naar voren lijkt te komen. Misschien omdat de immigranten ouder worden en de mensen, over het algemeen, zelfzuchtiger. We hebben, te vaak, geen zin meer om tijd voor een ander te maken...

Nu weet ik niet eens precies hoe lang we samen onder de Schemerlamp gepraat hebben. Mijn gissing is 18 jaar, maar het kan langer geweest zijn. En hoewel ik af en toe problemen voorgelegd kreeg die me om wijsheid deden smeken, was het een deel van mijn werk dat ik altijd met vreugde heb gedaan.

Eén ding schiet me nog te binnen omdat ik er zelf destijds zo'n plezier in had: de penpal lijsten, die we in 1961 en '62 samenstelden voor oudere jongelui. Door mijn uitgebreide correspondentie ontdekte ik hoeveel jonge mensen in onze kerken vurig verlangden naar vriendschap (en meer!) met een lid van de andere sekse. Ze schreven me dan, een beetje wanhopig, dat ze door hun baan of woonplaats niet in staat waren om jongelui van ongeveer dezelfde achtergrond te ontmoeten.

Nee, een christelijk huwelijksbureau was er in die dagen nog niet! Later ben ik wel eens nieuwsgierig geweest hoeveel goeds er uit C.C.'s welgemeende pogingen voortgekomen is. Want al

kwam er slechts één gelukkig huwelijk voort uit onze penpal lijsten, dan was die moeite ruimschoots beloond. Vindt u ook niet?

Wel, ik hoop van harte dat het u allen goed gegaan is, sinds we voor het laatst met elkaar in gesprek waren! God heeft mijn gezin rijk gezegend in die jaren: mijn man en ik hebben een gelukkig leven samen en werden inmiddels de grootouders van een stel kleine belhamels.

Dit wil niet zeggen dat we nu antiek aan het worden zijn. Verre van dat. Op mijn verjaardag, een paar weken geleden, maakte hij me wakker met een geschenk, dat me uit bed deed rollen van de lach. Het was een koffie-kop met het opschrift “Happy 29th birthday... again?” (Wat zei u? Ja, de schelm!)

Laten we op deze vrolijke noot eindigen, want ook C.C.'s veertigste verjaardag betekent niet dat ons blad nu “over the hill” is. Integendeel. Het is er in de laatste tijd, althans naar mijn mening, aanzienlijk op vooruitgegaan wat openhartigheid en lezenswaardigheid betreft. Dit is natuurlijk voor een groot deel te danken aan de redactie, die er kennelijk naar streeft om de zaken van meer dan één kant te belichten.

Maar het heeft ook te maken met een hoopgevende verandering in de lezerskring: met al die verontrusting over kerkelijke moeilijkheden, zijn we eindelijk bezig er achter te komen hoe belangrijk het is om te trachten onbevooroordeeld te zijn en de gesprekslijnen open te houden. Naar God. Naar elkander. Naar allen die geloven in de opgestane Heer.

Het allerbeste gewent en hartelijke groeten van  
Uw Saskia

### De beste wensen

... vervolg van pagina 34.

anderen met een ernstig, zo niet bars gezicht; terwijl weer anderen heel verschrikt kijken, alsof ze zojuist aan een explosie ontsnapt zijn. Al die uitdrukkingen zullen wel geen verband houden met hun lange huwelijksleven.

De rouwberichten, die er elke week weer zijn, hebben ook onze diepe aandacht. De tranen in onze lezerskring gestort zijn niet te tellen, terwijl de overgave, de troost en de moed die uit die overlijdensadvertenties spreken, brandende kaarsen zijn in dalen van duisternis. Een enkele maal zeggen die overlijdensadvertenties teveel; zelden zeggen ze te weinig. Katrien zei eens: “De meest bescheiden obituaries zijn de meest welsprekende.” Daar zit veel in!

### Drie vlaggen

En zo zitten we wat te mijmeren over

de inhoud van ons jubilerende blad.

We zijn dankbaar, dat we in de jaren van ouds onze eigen talrijke bijdragen mochten leveren in onze “Immigranten-mijmeringen.” We zijn blij, dat we heden onze gelukwensen mogen aanbieden aan het veertigjarige *Calvinist Contact*.

Zoals het bij feestelijkheden betaamt, hijsen we — in gedachten — de vlag ter ere van onze jubilerende wekelijkse metgezel. We hijsen drie vlaggen: eerst de kruisvlag, hoog in top; daarna onze canadese vlag, en tenslotte onze hollandse driekleur. Zij hebben veel, ja, alles te maken met het ontstaan en voortbestaan van ons blad.

Van harte gefeliciteerd, *Calvinist Contact*!

Wees en blijf een trouwe Getuige!

Arie

**KLM, in Canada  
sinds 1949,  
feliciteert  
Calvinist Contact,  
in Canada  
sinds 1945.**





## Canadian Calvinism: Another 40 years?

... continued from page 31.  
Christian communities who worry unduly about preserving the historic faith. Although a balanced approach will both "preserve and build," the need of the hour is to counterbalance our one-sided emphasis on preserving by calling one another to the task of building.

### Vitamin deficiency

There is perhaps a second imbalance in our community, resulting from a lack of genuine piety and devotion. We don't know why this is so. Our Calvinist tradition certainly has not always suffered from it. But those who are intimately acquainted with our community will testify that we are by and large too impersonal in matters of faith and that we shun the mystic side of it.

Yet, a man like Dr. Abraham Kuyper, whom we often quote in our campaigns for Christian action, was himself a truly pious man. It was not insignificant that he, in spite of his busy life, was in the

habit of writing a weekly meditation. His book of 110 devotions entitled "To Be Near unto God" (taken from Psalm 73) breathes recognition of the personal and mystic side of faith. "This knowledge of God only comes when love for Him begins to take on a personal character; when on the pathway of life for the first time you have met Him," he wrote in one of these meditations.

The "divide and conquer" style that characterizes some individuals and groups in our midst, the self-righteous tone some people use in their letters or other publications, suggest to us that we are not always walking in the footsteps of this truly pious forefather. With all our "totals" and "solas" we are too often a rather impious folk — a this-worldly, establishment-clinging group of individualists.

### Never say uncle

Not that we're giving up on the Reformed community. Nor are we letting go of the vision. The situation is

never hopeless. And we must keep our eyes fixed on the goal, while planting our feet firmly on the ground. This is where we believe all those who write in *Calvinist Contact* can make a great contribution.

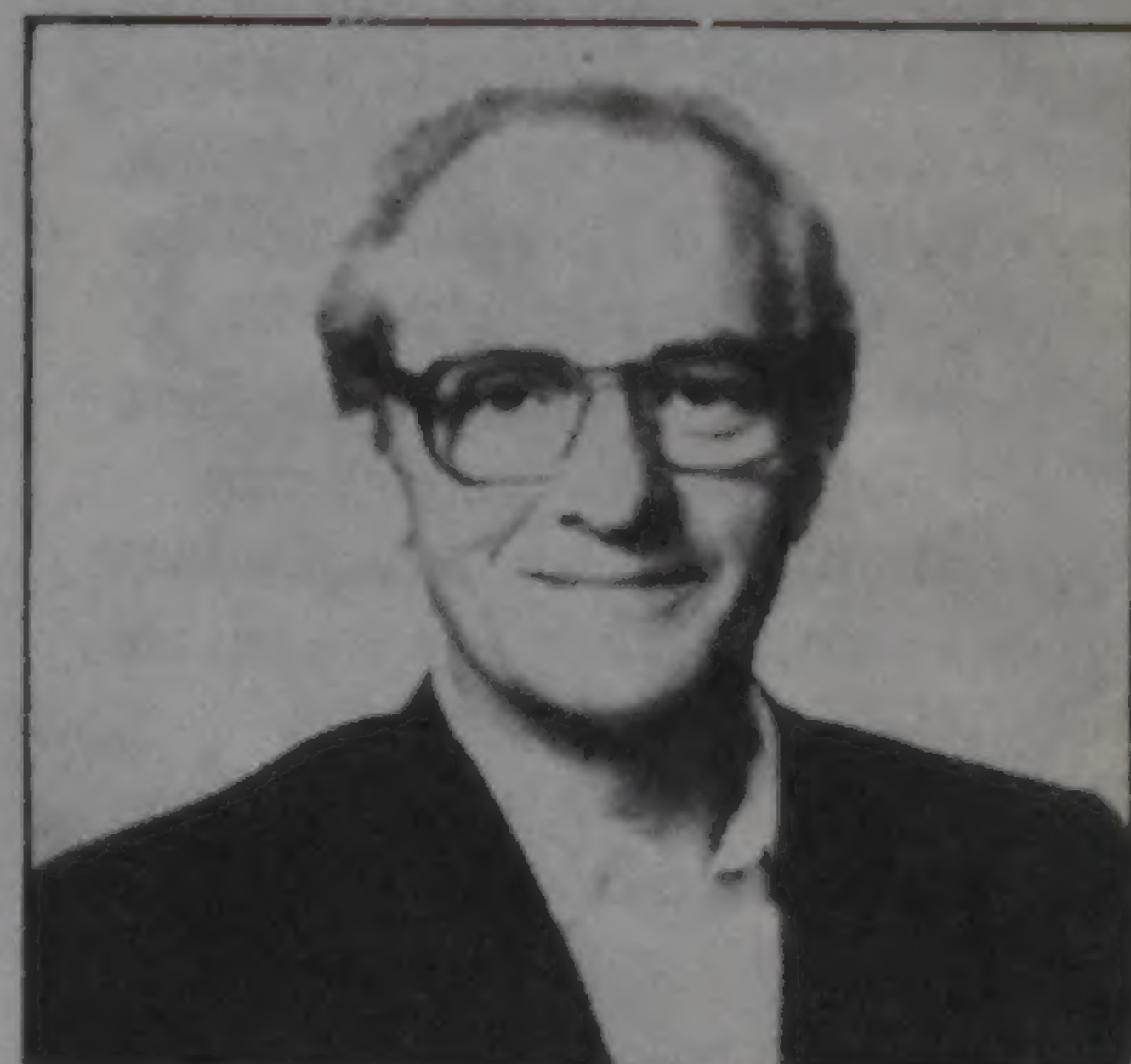
*Calvinist Contact* has gone through a difficult period the last six years, both from the point of view of community mentality and subscriptions to C.C. But since last January, things have begun to turn around. We are no longer losing more subscribers than we gain, and the feeling we get from the constituency is that it wants to move away from fruitless controversy. Instead, it wants to quietly keep on investing a Word-directed and Spirit-controlled Calvinist vision in the Canadian marketplace.

Whether all Canadian Calvinists are ever going to get their act together is something we can hope and pray for, but may not wait for. Time is simply too precious. Forty years is a fairly long time of opportunity. How many more years we will be given, no one knows. Our task is not to second-guess the life-

span of *Calvinist Contact* or of the Calvinist community.

We are called to redeem whatever time is given us by the faithful hand of our heavenly Father.

## Interests and loyalties the same



*The Banner* extends warm congratulations to *Calvinist Contact* for having been a good weekly paper to many Reformed people for 40 years.

Essentially, the ministry of our two weeklies is the same: serve the King by promoting the recognition of His gracious kingship. But we are also different because *The Banner* is a church magazine and *Calvinist Contact* has a wider scope.

Because both weeklies appeal to Christian Reformed Canadians, we may occasionally and unintentionally compete with each other. More often we are cooperating. Certainly our interests and loyalties are the same.

Our best wishes to Editor Bert Witvoet and to all members of the staff. God bless you.

A. Kuyvenhoven,  
Editor, *The Banner*  
Grand Rapids, Michigan,

## ATTENTION

### All regular C.C. subscribers

We sincerely hope you will enjoy reading our 40th anniversary issue which was mailed from our office in St. Catharines in the usual manner.

It is, however, possible that another copy of this issue will arrive at your door. We apologize for this duplication, but it could not be avoided! Also, you may have been given a copy at the church at which you worship.

If you receive one or more extra copies of our 40th birthday issue, please do us a favour and share it with a friend or family member. We would love to see you do a little promotion for *Calvinist Contact*. Try to persuade others to subscribe. We will reward you for your effort!

Please note the offer printed elsewhere in this issue. Just complete the coupon and send it with your cheque and instructions to us and we'll look after the rest. Thank you.

Stan De Jong,  
Manager

"KLM heeft non-stop vluchten naar Amsterdam deze winter!"

"Dus daarom zijn hun tarieven zo laag!"

De KLM heeft nu elke Dinsdag, Donderdag en Zaterdag een non-stop vlucht van Toronto naar Amsterdam. Het hele jaar door! En zesmaal per week in de zomer!

Vanuit Montreal zijn alle vluchten non-stop, in winter en zomer.

U kunt dus weg en terug wanneer u ook maar wilt. En op bepaalde dagen heeft de KLM speciale lage tarieven om het u nog gemakkelijker te maken. Nu is het werkelijk de moeite waard een extra keertje naar Nederland te reizen.

Aan de tarieven zijn enkele voorwaarden verbonden. Uw reisagent kan

u alle inlichtingen erover geven. Goede reis!

### RETOERTARIEVEN

	TORONTO	MONTREAL
TOT 23 OCT.	\$599*	\$559***
TOT 03 DEC.	\$529**	\$529**

\*Tot 28 sept. geldig op dinsdag en woensdag. Vanaf 29 sept. heen op dinsdag of zondag, terug op dinsdag of donderdag.

\*\*Geldig op dinsdag en donderdag.

\*\*\*Geldig op dinsdag en zondag.

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